

UK bans Chinese cameras from government buildings

Remove and replace without waiting for upgrades, British government advises.



The U.K. government advised departments to replace Chinese surveillance equipment without waiting for upgrades | Tolga Akmen/AFP via Getty Images

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Chinese-made surveillance equipment from sensitive sites including government buildings, based on a government review of security risks.

“The review has concluded that, in light of the threat to the U.K. and the increasing capability and connectivity of these systems, additional controls are required,” said Cabinet office minister Oliver Dowden in a [statement](#) to Parliament.

The cameras are “produced by companies subject to the National Intelligence Law of the People’s Republic of China,” Dowden added.

The British government has advised departments to disconnect Chinese surveillance equipment from departmental core networks, and remove and replace it without waiting for upgrades.

Last summer British politicians [called](#) for a ban on the use of surveillance cameras from Chinese companies Hikvision and Dahua, over security risks. The companies' products have been linked to mass surveillance and human rights abuses in China's Xinjiang region. A majority of the U.K.'s public sector CCTV networks use Hikvision and Dahua, according to a [report](#) from privacy advocacy group Big Brother Watch.

The U.K. government is advising departments to consider whether Chinese surveillance equipment should be banned from areas "outside the definition of sensitive sites" to further mitigate risk.

A Hikvision spokesperson told POLITICO, "it is categorically false to represent Hikvision as a threat to national security," and said the company cannot transmit data from end-users to third parties, does not manage end-user databases, or sell cloud storage in the U.K.

We "have been engaging with the U.K. government to clarify misunderstandings about the company, our business, and address their concerns. We will seek to urgently engage further with ministers to understand this decision," the spokesperson added.