

UK to ban new Huawei gear installations after Sept

November 30 2020



In this Wednesday, July 15, 2020 file photo, a worker wearing a mask to curb the spread of the coronavirus speaks on the phone near the Huawei logo in a store in Beijing. U.K. telecom companies won't be allowed to install Huawei equipment in their high-speed 5G networks after September 2021, the British government said Monday Nov. 30, 2020, hardening its line against the Chinese technology company. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan, File)

Wireless carriers in the U.K. won't be allowed to install Huawei equipment in their high-speed 5G networks after September 2021, the British government said Monday, hardening its line against the Chinese technology company.

The deadline is part of a roadmap the British government is laying down to remove "high risk" equipment suppliers with [draft legislation](#) that aims to tighten telecommunications security requirements.

The government of Prime Minister Boris Johnson in July banned Huawei from having a role in building Britain's next-generation mobile phone networks over [security concerns](#) triggered by U.S. sanctions. Britain and other European countries have started to fall in line after the U.S. lobbied allies to shun Huawei over fears its equipment could be used by China's communist rulers to facilitate electronic espionage.

Telecom operators were ordered to stop buying Huawei 5G equipment by the end of the year and have until 2027 to rip any of the company's existing gear out of their systems.

While the ban implied operators would have to stop installing Huawei gear, the latest announcement spells out the deadline clearly - making it harder for them to stockpile equipment.

Huawei declined to comment. It has previously denied the U.S. allegations and said Britain's ban was politically motivated.

"Today I am setting out a clear path for the complete removal of high risk vendors from our 5G networks," Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said. "This will be done through new and unprecedented powers to identify and ban telecoms equipment which poses a threat to our [national security](#)."

The Telecommunications (Security) Bill, which is set to be debated in Parliament on Tuesday, requires tougher security standards for 5G wireless and fiber optic networks and threatens heavy fines for companies that don't comply with the rules.

The government is also setting out a strategy to diversify its telecom equipment suppliers, including a research lab and investment in open radio standards technology. Huawei has just a handful of rivals including Finland's Nokia and Sweden's Ericsson, raising fears that relying on so few companies to supply critical infrastructure leaves networks open to vulnerabilities.

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