

British intelligence says Huawei risk manageable: FT

18 February 2019



Huawei is the leading manufacturer of equipment for the next generation of mobile phone networks, but several Western nations have banned the Chinese company's products over security concerns

British intelligence has concluded that security risks posed by using equipment made by Chinese telecom giant Huawei can be managed, the Financial Times reported on Monday.

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) sees ways of limiting risks from using Huawei in future 5G networks, according to two unnamed sources cited by the FT.

The firm is the leading manufacturer of equipment for next-generation 5G [mobile networks](#) that will bring near-instantaneous connectivity for smartphones, but some Western nations have barred it amid fears Beijing could gain access to sensitive communications and critical infrastructure.

The United States has been leading a campaign to persuade allies to blacklist Huawei equipment, and a decision by Britain, a key intelligence gathering partner, could undermine its effort.

"Other nations can make the argument that if the British are confident of mitigation against national security threats then they can also reassure their publics and the US administration that they are acting in a prudent manner in continuing to allow their telecommunications service providers to use Chinese components," one source was quoted by the FT as saying.

Responding to the report, a NCSC spokesperson said that "the National Cyber Security Centre is committed to the security of UK networks", adding that it has "a unique oversight and understanding of Huawei engineering and cyber security".

In Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China expects Britain "to maintain its open nature and make wise choices based on its own interests."

Security concerns have prompted the United States and Australia to ban Huawei equipment from their future 5G networks.

New Zealand has blocked its largest telecom carrier from using Huawei technology for the next generation network while the Czech Republic has reportedly excluded it from a 20-million-euro (\$22 million) tender to build a tax portal.

In December, Britain's largest mobile network provider BT said it was removing Huawei equipment from its 4G cellular network after the foreign intelligence service singled out the company as a security risk.

Meanwhile last week, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed that it would be difficult for the United States to partner with countries that co-locate Huawei equipment near "important American systems"—a claim Beijing described as "groundless".

Huawei, which is the world's second-largest

smartphone maker, has also recently had a senior executive arrested in Canada on accusations of busting US sanctions on Iran.

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