



Fecklessly Fining 4chan

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You host a website. Users can say whatever they want on this site. Next thing you know, a UK regulatory agency is sending you, an American organization based in the United States, a letter announcing a trillion-dollar fine for failure to comply with UK censorship demands. How much do you panic?

If you're 4chan, not much.

4chan hasn't been fined a trillion dollars yet. But some day the ever-increasing meaningless fine may reach that level.

The redcoat-staffed regulatory agency is called

Ofcom. It has [fined](#) 4chan £520,000 — in dollars that's about \$693,000 — “Under a Law That Doesn't Apply in the US.” The bulk of the fine is for failing to implement age verification — that is, failure to force users who are by and large anonymous to identify themselves.

The back-and-forth between Ofcom and 4chan started in April 2025. Ofcom isn't getting the message. 4chan's lawyer says the company “has broken no laws in the United States, my client will not pay any penalty. Increasing the size of a censorship fine does not cure its legal invalidity in the United States. . . . As has been explained to your agency, ad nauseam, the United Kingdom lost the American Revolutionary War. We are not in the mood to discuss the matter further. . . .”

The only problem for 4chan I see on the horizon is the struggle in the U.S. to impose a similar regulatory regime here. Fortunately, our own courts still somewhat recognize the relevance of our First Amendment.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.