



Rogue British Agency

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Ofcom has a low batting average in collecting its extortionate fines.

This is the UK agency enforcing the UK's Online Safety Act. Ofcom's mission includes forcing sundry websites to require all visitors to present proof of age — essentially, to ID themselves.

The Act also lets Ofcom compel services that enable encrypted messaging to provide a way to tell whether anything illegal is being said or shown in the messages. That is, compel them to render the encryption pointless.

LBC [reports](#) that “Just two tech companies [out of

11 socked with big fines] have paid fines to Ofcom for being in breach of the Online Safety Act, the regulator's chief executive has admitted.”

One is [Itai Tech](#), a British firm. It paid £55,000. I find no info about the second, and Ofcom generally doesn't disclose whether individual companies it has fined have paid up.

Among the known non-payers, several are based outside of the UK. In other words, the UK government is trying to censor and extort the whole world, or at least the semi-free parts of it.

4chan, based in the U.S., has fought Ofcom very publicly. It “owes” (so far) maybe £520,000, which it has vowed to never pay.

4Chan's lawyer expects that Ofcom would receive “a very chilly reception in an American courtroom if it ever tries to enforce its fines in the United States.” Its only alternative, he [says](#), is to wage war and try to extract payment that way.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.