Research sparks calls for tougher enforcement on social media companies

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Research into the use of Russian-linked social media accounts following the 2017 UK terrorist attacks has led to calls for greater regulation of

technology companies.

In their report on Disinformation and "[fake news](#)," the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee described how work by the Crime and Security Research Institute was among "strong evidence" which, "detailed ways in which the Kremlin attempted to influence attitudes in UK politics."

Following the inquiry, MPs have called for stronger enforcement on technology and [social media companies](#). They also found that current electoral law is 'not fit for purpose' and that Facebook "intentionally and knowingly violated both data privacy and anti-competition laws."

Professor Martin Innes, Director of the Crime and Security Institute, based at Cardiff University, said: "This is an important and timely report. Our research into the use of [social media platforms](#), that the Committee has drawn upon in formulating their recommendations, demonstrates that urgent action needs to be taken to prevent malign actors from using social media platforms to spread harmful and misleading content in the aftermath of terror attacks."

The CSRI's ground-breaking report entitled, "Russian influence and interference measures following the 2017 UK [terrorist attacks](#)' showed the level of influence and interference by Russian-linked [social media accounts](#) was considerably more extensive than had been reported previously.

After analysing 30 million data points across a variety of social media platforms, researchers identified at least 47 different accounts that strived to manipulate the public debate that followed each terrorist incident.

Professor Innes added: "The evidence we collected suggested a

systematic strategic political communications campaign being directed at the UK designed to amplify the public harms of terrorist attacks."

More information: Influence And Interference From Russian Twitter Accounts Following UK Terrorist Attacks. crestresearch.ac.uk/news/russi … twitter-influence-uk

Provided by Cardiff University