



Christina Rees MP and Sir Roger Gale MP

Chairs of the Public Committee for the Online Safety Bill

House of Commons

SW1A 0AA

Dear Chairs,

I wanted to write to follow up on a mention of Amazon Alexa in a recent oral evidence session your Committee heard, as part of your work scrutinising the Online Safety Bill.

The Chief Executive of the Anti-Semitism Policy Trust, Danny Stone, highlighted two inappropriate answers on Alexa. We wanted to follow up to explain a bit more about how Alexa works, and to reassure you of the robust policies, systems and processes we have in place to identify inappropriate content.

We take any concerns raised extremely seriously and I can confirm Amazon took immediate action to block the responses to the questions raised to you on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

As you may know, Amazon Alexa is a voice service that powers Amazon Echo and other devices. Customers can ask Alexa for information, to answer questions, play music, read the news, set timers and alarms, check sports scores and much more. With this service, we aim to provide customers with a helpful and informative experience. To support this, Alexa uses answers curated by our team as well as information from a wide range of news sources, select websites, external contributors, and other services to generate responses for customers. Alexa does not, however, offer a possibility for customers to search the internet. We are keen to ensure transparency about where this information comes from, and we often highlight the source (e.g. which website the information is from) both in voice-only responses and on-screen.

Whilst we strive to ensure Alexa draws information from diverse sources, we want to make sure that the information is accurate and appropriate. Our policies do not allow hate speech, content which is discriminatory, or that incites racial or gender hatred. We have automated filters in place to help prevent potentially offensive content from surfacing, such as profane or offensive words and topics. The automated tools are supplemented by dedicated teams who proactively review answers to ensure they comply with our guidelines too. While our systems capture the majority of offensive and profane content, there may be very rare occurrences where inappropriate content isn't identified. In addition to the automated tools and the human reviewers, we make it easy for people to report anything they're concerned about and have teams ready to promptly investigate. We have teams dedicated to continuously improving all filters and systems we have in place so they get better over time. We will use the concerns raised to continue to improve the accuracy and appropriateness of the information provided too.

I hope this information helps but do let us know if you would like any further information.

Best wishes

Anna

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