Notice on the Issuance of the "Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Overall Governance of Internet Information Service Algorithms"

Document published by the CAC (2021) No. 7

All provincial, autonomous region, and municipal cybersecurity and informatization offices, Party Committee propaganda departments, education offices (education committees), science and technology offices (committees, bureaus), telecommunications management bureaus, public security offices (bureaus), culture and tourism offices (bureaus), market supervision bureaus (offices, committees), and radio and television bureaus; the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps cybersecurity and informatization office, Party Committee propaganda department, education bureau, science and technology bureau, public security bureau, culture, sports, radio, television, and tourism bureaus, and market regulation bureau:

In order to strengthen the overall governance of Internet information service algorithms, and stimulate the healthy, orderly, and flourishing development of the sector, nine ministries and commissions, the Cyberspace Administration of China, the Central Propaganda Department, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the State Administration of Market Regulation, and the National Radio and Television Administration, have formulated the "Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Overall Governance of Internet Information Service Algorithms." They are hereby issued to you; please integrate them into practice and earnestly implement them.

Cyberspace Administration of China
Central Propaganda Department
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Science and Technology
Ministry of Industry and Information Technology
Ministry of Public Security
Ministry of Culture and Tourism
State Administration of Market Regulation
National Radio and Television Administration

Sept. 17, 2021

Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Overall Governance of Internet Information Service Algorithms

In recent years, Internet information service algorithms (hereinafter referred to as "algorithms") have played an important role in areas like accelerating the dissemination of Internet information, enrichiching the digital economy, and promoting social development. At the same time, the unreasonable use of algorithms also affects the regular order of information dissemination, markets, and society, and poses challenges to safeguarding ideological security, social fairness and justice, and the legitimate rights and interests of netizens. In order to thoroughly implement the policy plans of the Party Central Committee and the State Council; to manage, use, and develop the application of algorithms well; and to comprehensively improve overall network governance capabilities; the following Opinions

are hereby put forward on strengthening the security governance of Internet information service algorithms.

I. General Requirements

(1) Guiding Ideology

Adhere to the guidance of Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, especially General Secretary Xi Jinping's important thinking on a cyber superpower [网络强国]; thoroughly implement the spirit of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Plenary Sessions of the 19th Central Committee. Uphold positive energy as the general requirement, management as a hard principle, good usage [用得好] as the true skill. Guided by the safe, reliable, high-quality, and innovative development of algorithms, establish a sound algorithm security governance mechanism, build a comprehensive algorithm security supervision system, promote independent innovation in algorithms, encourage the healthy, orderly, and prosperous development of algorithms, and provide strong support for building a cyber superpower.

(2) Basic Principles

Persevere in the correct orientation; strengthen awareness of scientific and technological ethics, safety, and the bottom line; give full play to the utility of algorithms for disseminating positive energy; and create a cyberspace of clean and upright winds [风清气正]. Uphold the rule of law, strengthen the construction of laws and regulations, innovate models of technological supervision, crack down on violations of laws and regulations, and establish a sound multiparty algorithm security governance mechanism. Insist on risk prevention and control, promote graded and categorized [分级分类] security management for algorithms, effectively identify high-risk algorithms, and implement precise governance; adhere to rights protection, and guide algorithm application to be fair and equitable, transparent, and fully interpretable; fully protect the legitimate rights and interests of netizens; and persist in technological innovation, vigorously promote China's algorithm innovation research work, protect algorithm intellectual property rights, strengthen the deployment and promotion of self-developed algorithms, and enhance the core competitiveness of China's algorithms.

(3) Main Objectives

Over the next three years, gradually establish a comprehensive algorithm security governance structure with a robust governance mechanism, a refined supervisory system, and a standardized algorithm ecosystem.

- Complete governance mechanism. Formulate robust policies and statutes for the governance of Internet information service algorithm security, with clear rights and responsibilities for algorithm security governance, an efficiently operating governance structure, a governance mechanism with reliable laws, and multifaceted cooperation and multiparty participation taking shape.
- Refined supervisory system. Innovatively construct and form a multi-dimensional, integrated supervision system that includes algorithm security risk monitoring, algorithm security assessments, investigation into science and technology ethics,

algorithm filing management, and the handling of algorithm-related violations of laws and regulations.

- Standardized algorithm ecosystem. Algorithms are to be oriented properly with abundant positive energy; the application of algorithms is to be fair and just, and disclosed and transparent; the development of algorithms is to be secure and controllable and independently innovated, and to effectively prevent hidden risks caused by the abuse of algorithms.

II. Completing Algorithm Security Governance Mechanisms

(1) Strengthen the standards for algorithm governance. Refine algorithm security governance policies and regulations; accelerate the formulation of algorithm management regulations; clarify algorithm management subjects, scope, requirements, legal responsibilities, etc.; improve algorithm security governance measures; and formulate supporting documents such as standards and guidelines.

(2) Optimize the algorithmic governance structure. Further clarify the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of government, enterprises, industry organizations, and netizens in algorithm security governance; scientifically and rationally lay out the organizational structure for governance; standardize operations, and connect them with each other; create a multiparty, common algorithm security governance situation of government supervision, enterprises fulfilling their obligations, industry self-discipline, and social supervision.

(3) Strengthen overall coordination and governance. The cybersecurity and informatization department, together with the propaganda, education, science and technology, industry and information technology, public security, culture and tourism, market supervision, radio and television, and other departments, are to establish a long-term mechanism for departmental coordination and joint action, perform supervisory responsibilities, and jointly develop algorithm security governance.

(4) Strengthen the main responsibilities of enterprises. Enterprises should establish a system responsible for algorithm security, complete algorithm security management organisation mechanisms, strengthen risk prevention and dealing with troubleshooting, and increase the capacity and level of algorithm security emergency handling. Enterprises should strengthen awareness of their responsibilities, and take primary responsibility for the outcomes produced in applying algorithms.

(5) Strengthen self-discipline of industry organizations. The Internet information service industry should strengthen industry self-discipline, actively develop the task of popularizing algorithm science and technology, gradually build algorithm security governance capabilities, attract ranks of expert talent, gather resource input from multiple areas, assume social responsibility for algorithm security governance, and provide strong support for algorithm security governance.

(6) Advocate for netizen oversight and participation. Encourage netizens at large to actively participate in algorithm security governance, and effectively strengthen information exchange and effective communication between the government, enterprises, industry organizations, and netizens. Have the government actively accept reports and complaints from netizens, and have enterprises conscientiously accept social supervision and provide timely feedback on the outcomes.

III. Building Supervision and Management Systems for Algorithm Security

(7) Effectively monitor algorithm security risks. Conduct daily monitoring work of the data use, application landscape, impact, effects, etc., of algorithms; perceive changes in online dissemination trends, market norms, netizens' activities, etc., brought about by the use of algorithms; provide early warning about risks such as where the use of algorithms may engender non-standardized, unfair, and unjust outcomes; and discover security problems with the application of algorithms.

(8) Vigorously launch assessments of algorithm security. Organize and establish specialized technology assessment teams; deeply analyze algorithmic mechanisms; assess the flaws and vulnerabilities in algorithm design, deployment, use, and other application segments; research the ideological, social justice, moral, ethical, and other security risks engendered by the application of algorithms; and put forward focused response measures.

(9) Advance algorithm filing work in an orderly manner. Establish algorithm filing systems, comb through the basic situation of algorithm filing, complete algorithm grading and categorization systems, clarify the scope of algorithm filing, and conduct filing work in an orderly manner. Vigorously guide and assist filing, actively publish filing status, and accept social supervision.

(10) Continue to advance innovation in supervision and management models. Continue to research new technology development trends in the field of algorithms; advance the coordinated development of supervision and management models and algorithm technology; continuously perfect, upgrade, and innovate supervision methods and governance measures; and prevent backwardness in supervision and management models from leading to algorithm security risks.

(11) Strictly strike against activities that violate laws and regulations. Strive to resolve algorithm security problems to which netizens react strongly; strictly attack algorithm-related activities violating laws and regulations discovered during algorithm monitoring, assessment, filing, and other such work, as well as verified reports from netizens; and firmly uphold the security of Internet information service algorithms.

IV. Promoting the Standardized Development of the Algorithm Ecosystem

(12) Establish the correct orientation for algorithms. Carry forward the socialist core values view, uphold the correct political direction, public opinion orientation, and value orientation in the application of algorithms. Raise the accuracy and efficacy of positive energy dissemination, standardize information distribution activities and order, promote enterprises to strengthen the dissemination of positive energy with the help of algorithms, and guide the application of algorithms to strive upward and for good.

(13) Promote openness and transparency of algorithms. Standardize the conduct of enterprise algorithm application, protect the lawful rights and interests of netizens, uphold the principles of fairness and justice, and stimulate the openness and transparency of algorithms. Urge enterprises to disclose basic algorithm principles, optimization objectives, decision-making standards, and other such information in a timely, reasonable, and effective manner. Do a good job explaining the results of algorithms, open up complaints channels, eliminate social misgivings, and promote the healthy development of algorithms.

(14) Encourage algorithm innovation and development. Increase algorithm innovation capabilities, vigorously launch algorithm research and development work, support the profound integration of algorithms with all areas of society and the economy. Raise independent and controllable algorithm capabilities, strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights, popularize the use of self-learning algorithm products, and strengthen core competitiveness in algorithms.

(15) Prevent the risks of algorithm abuse. Protect the order of dissemination, markets, and society, in cyberspace; prevent exploitative uses of algorithms that interfere with societal public opinion, suppress competition, harm netizens' rights and interests, and other such acts; and prevent hidden risks in areas such as ideology, economic development, and social management caused by the abuse of algorithms.