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Post by **Michael Geiger**

Peer Response

82 days ago

Thank you Ying, your post clearly illustrates the consequences of irresponsible behaviour and decisions by managers and the conflict that employees are in as a result. ACM (N.D.) emphasizes in the case study that the public criticism that the employees planned is ethically justifiable on the one hand, but on the other hand they could still be legally responsible.

While the Public Interest Disclosure Act could protect the engineers from prosecution, the expressed interest of government agencies could also raise suspicions that the release of information about the project under the Justice and Security Act would violate the national interest in keeping the plans secret, as government officials have expressed an interest in the development of fatal reactions (Charity Commission for England and Wales, 2020; Security Service MI5, N.D.).

This reveals a central conflict, ethically correct behaviour and legislation are not always compatible. On the one hand, legally permitted behaviour can be ethically reprehensible. On the other hand, ethically responsible behaviour can violate laws. A considered handling of ethics and laws is therefore of great importance, as the examples of well-known whistleblowers like Edward Snowden and Julian Assange have shown in the past.

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Reply



Ying, thank you for choosing this topic. I was going to discuss this, myself, but realised that I would have written a dissertation instead of a blog post...

I agree with your position that laws and regulations need to be established to govern the use of automated weapons. The capabilities AI/ML technology brings to martial applications – such as law enforcement, warfare, and self-defence – enable greater precision, scale, and speed (Nasu & Korpela, 2022; West & Karsten, 2019). Furthermore, these technologies have helped states keep pace with evolving threats, from the strategic to the tactical levels (Nasu & Korpela, 2022; West & Karsten, 2019). Because of this, AI/ML development has become a facet the of “great power competition” between nations (West & Karsten, 2019).

This certainly warrants international regulation, as international competition has pressured countries to develop and field technologies that are both increasingly dangerous and prone to errors (Garcia, 2019; Marijan, 2022). Though many international regulatory bodies, including the United Nations, has sought to implement conventions for automated weapons, several countries have allegedly objected to such regulations in order to freely pursue development (Garcia, 2019; Marijan, 2022).

Automated weapons may eventually reduce harm to human beings; however, much care needs to be taken as these technologies mature and proliferate – else, they may cause rampant devastation.

Thank you for your post, Ying,

Rob

References

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Reply.



Thank you Ying for your very informative post on the adverse effects of artificial intelligence and machine learning enabled autonomous vehicles for the use of military and law enforcement agencies. I agree with your notion that Q Industries evolving product offerings demonstrate a significant violation of the British Computer Society (BCS) Code of Conduct. Furthermore, Q's initial development of autonomous vehicles equipped with non-lethal responses have inadequate safeguards to mitigate against the substitution of tear gas with a lethal poison to disable aggressive individuals in conflict zones and non-violent protests (ACM, N.D.). Consequently, this represents repressed free speech and dangers to human life which is a violation of principles 1.1 and 2.5 of the BCS code of conduct which promotes respect for public health, privacy, security, and the risks of machine learning systems (BCS, 2022).

As a result, Q Industries must modify its design, development, and deployment processes to include stakeholder awareness concerning the ethical and public risks of its artificial intelligence and machine learning enabled autonomous vehicles (Yapo & Weiss, 2018).

Lastly, Asaro (2012) denotes that military organizations and governments in armed conflict and non-violent protest situations are saddled with the duty of averting the designation of deadly autonomous vehicles which infringe on moral and legal humanitarian rights.

References

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