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By: TA | AP Brief

Pentagon is embracing Musk's Grok AI chatbot

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said that Elon Musk's artificial intelligence chatbot Grok will join Google's generative AI engine in operating inside the Pentagon network, as part of a broader push to feed as much of the military's data as possible into the developing technology.

"Very soon we will have the world's leading AI models on every unclassified and classified network throughout our department," Hegseth said in a speech at Musk's space flight company, SpaceX, in South Texas.

The announcement comes just days after Grok — which is embedded into X, the social media network owned by Musk — drew global outcry and scrutiny for generating highly sexualized deepfake images of people without their consent.

Malaysia and Indonesia have blocked Grok, while the U.K.'s independent online safety watchdog announced an investigation Monday. Grok has limited image generation and editing to paying users.

Hegseth said Grok will go live inside the Defense Department later this month and announced that he would "make all appropriate data" from the military's IT systems available for "AI exploitation."

He also said data from intelligence databases would be fed into AI systems.

Hegseth's aggressive push to embrace the still-developing technology stands in contrast to the Biden administration, which, while pushing federal agencies to come up with policies and uses for AI, was also wary of misuse.

Officials said rules were needed to ensure that the technology, which could be harnessed for mass surveillance, cyberattacks or even lethal autonomous devices, was being used responsibly.

Ideological constraints

The Biden administration enacted a framework in late 2024 that directed national security agencies to expand their use of the most advanced AI systems but prohibited certain uses, such as applications that would violate constitutionally protected civil rights or any system that would automate the deployment of nuclear weapons.

It is unclear if those prohibitions are still in place under the Trump administration.

During his speech, Hegseth spoke of the need to streamline and speed up technological innovations within the military, saying, "We need innovation to come from anywhere and evolve with speed and purpose."

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He noted that the Pentagon possesses "combat-proven operational data from two decades of military and intelligence operations."

"AI is only as good as the data that it receives, and we're going to make sure that it's there," Hegseth said.

The defense secretary said he wants AI systems within the Pentagon to be responsible, though he went on to say he was shrugging off any AI models "that won't allow you to fight wars."

Hegseth said his vision for military AI systems means that they operate "without ideological constraints that limit lawful military applications," before adding that the Pentagon's "AI will not be woke."

Musk developed and pitched Grok as an alternative to what he called "woke AI" interactions from rival chatbots like Google's Gemini or OpenAI's ChatGPT.

In July, Grok also caused controversy after it appeared to make antisemitic comments that praised Adolf Hitler and shared several

antisemitic posts.

The Pentagon did not immediately respond to questions about the issues with Grok.