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New Rules Could Force Internet Companies to Share Russian User Data

By The Moscow Times

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The law would require Internet companies to store information about their users for six months and share it with security or police agencies at their request.

Russia's media watchdog and the Federal Security Service have drafted regulations that would require Internet companies to reveal their users' email addresses, contacts, and visited websites at the request of law enforcement agencies, a news report said.

The package of rules would accompany Russia's so-called anti-terrorism law, which tightens government control over Internet expression, when it takes effect on Aug. 1, Vedomosti reported Tuesday, citing several unidentified participants of a meeting at the Communications Ministry where the regulations were discussed.

The law would require Internet companies to store information about their users for six months and share it with security or police agencies at their request, without the need

to obtain a court order that is currently required.

The types of information that media watchdog Roskomnadzor and the security service, or FSB, would require Internet companies to provide include all known e-mail addresses; a list of contacts and their relationship to the user — such as whether they are friends or subscribers; the amount and volume of communications that the user sends and receives; and any changes to the user's accounts, Vedomosti reported.

Security services could also demand information about which specific pages of social networks, online forums or blogs a user has visited and when, as well as the type of devices that the person uses to go online, Vedomosti reported.

The content of e-mail messages, online posts or other communications would not have to be given out, the report said.

Svetlana Anurova, a spokeswoman for Google in Russia, told Vedomosti that the company would not comment until it had reviewed the upcoming law.

A Yandex spokesperson said the company would comply, while the Mail.Ru Group, which operates social networks Odnoklassniki and VKontakte, declined to comment, the report said.

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