Cellphone jamming is illegal says Icasa

The use of a device to jam cellular phone signals, privately or publicly, is illegal, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa) said on Wednesday.

"No organisation in South Africa is allowed to jam cellular signals and any device which is used to jam a signal is illegal," Icasa spokesman Paseka Maleka told *Sapa*.

Maleka referred to Government Gazette 24123, from November 2002, which contains Icasa's findings on "mobile telephone blocking devices".

"There appears to be no legitimate radio communications use for cellular jamming devices. Icasa has therefore decided that use of jamming devices will not be authorised," the gazette reads.

"Icasa notes the concern around the use of cellphones in public places and encourages the mobile cellular service providers to embark on programmes to promote responsible mobile phone use by consumers."

Icasa had accepted submissions on jamming before it finalised the report.

Security companies and asset trackers argued against jamming, saying they could not protect their clients' assets without using cellular phones.

Others argued it could promote criminal activity, where robbers might take advantage of a blocked signal in a bank to ensure no one called the police.

Emergency services would also be unavailable should the need arise.

Icasa argued that people who were using their cellular phones "responsibly" would be unfairly disadvantaged by a blocked signal.

Icasa found that security cluster departments, such as defence, the Hawks or correctional services, could not use jammers

as they had "alternative legislation" to support other means of security.

Jamming devices emit radio waves with the same frequencies as cellular phones., causing interference and making the phones unusable.

These devices were used primarily in places where a phone call would be disruptive, or could prevent sensitive information from being transmitted.

Source: *Sapa* via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com