



SACTA STATEMENT REGARDING ILLEGAL CELLPHONE JAMMING DEVICES AND JAMMING ACTIVITIES

The South African Cellular Telecommunications Association (SACTA) advises that in terms of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the possession and use of cellphone jamming devices is illegal and compromises the quality of cellular services in South Africa.

SACTA is an independent non-profit association representing cellular communications equipment manufacturers and cellular network operators within South Africa.

Cellphone jammers transmit electronic signals that interfere with the ability of cellphones to receive signals from base stations. The use of cellphone jammers to disrupt telephone communications is known as jamming, an illegal practice that could have several negative impacts:

- The quality and extent of legitimate communications by mobile cellular phone users would be jeopardised.
- Access to emergency services, such as the 112 emergency service, would be disrupted.
- Mobile cellular phone users could suffer inconvenience or loss of business.
- Customers responsibly using silent messaging features on their mobile cellular phones would be disadvantaged.
- SACTA chairman Gert du Plessis, further states that cellular telecommunications licences have been issued to cellular network operators in terms of Section 37 of the Act. Frequency has been exclusively assigned to cellular operators for the provision of cellular services and nobody other than the licensed cellular

operators may transmit radio signals in these frequency assignments. Any interference caused within the assigned frequencies would jeopardise their efficient use and be counter to the terms and conditions on which the mobile cellular operators' licences were issued.

- Furthermore, cellular network operators are obliged in terms of their licence conditions to provide coverage nationally to the public and to ensure that this service meets a specified grade of service standard. The public has a right to access services to which they subscribe.

SACTA would like to request South Africa's more than 10 million cellphone users to use their handsets with due respect for the rights of others. SACTA and its members have in the past issued guidelines for the responsible use of cellphones and will continue to advocate considerate cellphone use in the future.

Recognising that environments exist where the use of cellphones may be undesirable, South Africa's cellular operators also appeal to those in control of such environments to develop and maintain an appropriate "cellphone etiquette". This could be achieved through appropriate signage, by promoting the use of silent messaging features and by advising people that the use of cellphones in particular areas is not welcome.