



Electronic Communications Committee (ECC)
within the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT)

ECC RECOMMENDATION (03)04

WITH REGARD TO FORBIDDING THE PLACING ON THE MARKET AND USE OF GSM JAMMERS IN THE CEPT MEMBER COUNTRIES

Recommendation adopted by the Working Group "Radio Regulatory" (RR)

INTRODUCTION

A GSM jammer is a device that transmits signals on the same frequencies at which the GSM operations are being conducted with the aim of blocking GSM communications in a certain area. Jammers, operating at 900/1800 MHz, as well as 800 MHz and 1900 MHz, seem to be illegally available in the market with a typical output power of 100 mW and an effective coverage of 20 metres for open space. However there are also devices available with a much higher output power, which can cover 4 km or more. The handy structure, easy installation and relatively low cost of the jammers make them attractive for illegal usage. These devices come in different degrees of sophistication and can be used for several different purposes, both desirable and undesirable.

Sophisticated or selective¹ devices can be used for security purposes (non-civil use). GSM jammers, when in the hands of the general public, may be used to make GSM traffic in certain parts of the coverage area completely impossible, which jeopardises the proper operation of the GSM networks. It is this use, which is considered undesirable by CEPT Administrations, and there is a common opinion that ways have to be found to prevent the use of such devices. Many Administrations and also the EU Commission have expressed their concern about the jamming devices, which may pose an uncontrollable threat to the operation of licensed radio services. Since licences have been issued to GSM operators in the 900/1800 MHz band, for exclusive use of the frequencies, the Administrations are bound to make all efforts to allow interference free use of the bands. Also within the frequency plans of the administrations, no assignments for civil use of jammers have been made at this moment in time and therefore they interfere with the use of legitimately assigned spectrum.

The manufacturers claim that these jammers are built mainly for the purpose of stopping the GSM signals in a limited area such as hospitals, conference rooms, schools, theatres, etc. in order to provide the users with an undisturbed area for a defined period. However, they are also used recently for other purposes, such as for just disturbing the GSM traffic. In all these cases the use of such devices is considered undesirable by the CEPT Administrations and the subsequent question is how to prevent the placing on the market and the use of this equipment.

For those member countries that have implemented the R&TTE (1999/5/EC) and EMC (89/336/EEC) Directives it is not possible to construct jammers that comply with the R&TTE or the EMC Directives and that such devices cannot therefore be legally placed on the market for use under these Directives.

Therefore, where such products claim compliance with the R&TTE or the EMC Directive, market surveillance authorities are under an obligation to take them from the market under the provisions of those Directives and to notify such actions to the EC.

For those countries that have not implemented the R&TTE and EMC Directives national provisions should prevent the placing on the market and the use of this equipment.

¹ Selective, sophisticated, or intelligent devices, which are not considered jammers.

“The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations,

considering

- a) that GSM jammers are designed to make the use of GSM network operating in the 900 MHz and 1800 MHz band impossible in the areas where they are placed;
- b) that the legality of GSM jamming has been discussed at several instances within the CEPT and within the EU in the context of the R&TTE, and the EMC Directives;
- c) that these discussions have made it clear that there is no legal basis to allow that mobile communications be disrupted by jamming devices operated by the public;
- d) that it is not possible to construct jammers which comply with the Essential Requirements of the R&TTE or the EMC Directives and therefore it is not possible to place this equipment on the market;

noting

- 1) Articles 5, 7 and 9 of the R&TTE Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 1999 on radio equipment and telecommunications terminal equipment and the mutual recognition of their conformity;
- 2) ERC Decision (94) 01 on the frequency bands to be designated for the coordinated introduction of the GSM digital pan-European communications system, ERC Decision (95) 03 on the frequency bands to be designated for the introduction of DCS 1800 and ERC Decision (97) 02 on the extended frequency bands to be used for the GSM Digital Pan-European Communication System;
- 3) Council Directive (87/372/EEC) of 25 June 1987 on the frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European cellular digital land-based mobile communications in the Community.

recommends

- a) that CEPT Administrations shall not allow the placing on their market nor the use of GSM jammers;
- b) that CEPT Administrations shall exchange information on market surveillance activities with regard to GSM jammers;”

Note:

Please check the CEPT web site (<http://www.cept.org>) for the up to date position on the implementation of this and other ERC and ECC Recommendations.