



Notification Number: 2017/360/UK

## Telecommunications Dangerous Drugs. The Drug Dealing Telecommunications Restriction Orders Regulations 2017

Date received : 02/08/2017

End of Standstill : 14/08/2017

Invocation of the Emergency Procedure : Yes

### Message

Message 001

Communication from the Commission - TRIS/(2017) 02019

Directive (EU) 2015/1535

Notificación - Oznámení - Notifikation - Notifizierung - Teavitamine - Γνωστοποίηση - Notification - Notification - Notifica - Pieteikums - Pranešimas - Bejelentés - Notifika - Kennisgeving - Zawiadomienie - Notificação - Hlásenie-Obvestilo - Ilmoitus - Anmälan - Нотификация : 2017/0360/UK - Notificare.

No abre el plazo - Nezahtuje odklady - Fristerne indledes ikke - Kein Fristbeginn - Viivituste perioodi ei avata - Καμμία έναρξη προθεσμίας - Does not open the delays - N'ouvre pas de délais - Non fa decorrere la mora - Neietekmē atlikšanu - Atidėjimai nepradedami - Nem nyitja meg a késések - Ma' jiftaħ il-perijodi ta' dawmien - Geen termijnbegin - Nie otwiera opóźnień - Não inicia o prazo - Neotvorí oneskorenia - Ne uvaja zamud - Määräaika ei ala tästä - Inleder ingen frist - Не се предвижда период на прекъсване - Nu deschide perioadele de stagnare - Nu deschide perioadele de stagnare.

(MSG: 201702019.EN)

#### 1. Structured Information Line

MSG 001 IND 2017 0360 UK EN 02-08-2017 UK NOTIF

#### 2. Member State

UK

#### 3. Department Responsible

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
Europe Directorate  
1 Victoria Street  
London, SW1H 0ET

Email: [technicalregulations@beis.gov.uk](mailto:technicalregulations@beis.gov.uk)

#### 3. Originating Department



Home Office  
Crime Directorate  
Tackling Crime Unit  
2 Marsham Street  
London, SW1P 4DF  
Email: Liz.Crocker@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

#### **4. Notification Number**

2017/0360/UK - V00T

#### **5. Title**

Telecommunications Dangerous Drugs. The Drug Dealing Telecommunications Restriction Orders Regulations 2017

#### **6. Products Concerned**

The Drug Dealing Telecommunications Restriction Orders (DDTRO) Regulations 2017 give effect to Section 80A of the Serious Crime Act 2015: Prevention or restriction of use of communication devices for drug dealing, a new power to help police take action against the issue of county lines drug dealing. The regulations will set out how the police or the National Crime Agency (NCA) can apply to the courts for a DDTRO. The effect of the order is to compel communication providers to disconnect mobile phone lines used to deal drugs.

#### **7. Notification Under Another Act**

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#### **8. Main Content**

The DDTRO responds to an operational need of the police and the National Crime Agency (NCA) to be able to close down phone lines being used by gangs to deal drugs. There is currently no existing legal power to compel communication providers to disconnect phone lines used to deal drugs. The new power has been designed to support the police and NCA in tackling the criminal threat of criminal gangs originating in large urban areas, who travel to suburban areas or county or coastal towns to sell illegal drugs. The gangs use mobile phones to promote and orchestrate the sale of drugs. The 'deal line' phone number is heavily marketed to users as a way of buying drugs and is therefore absolutely essential to this criminal groups operating model. These gangs typically use and criminally exploit vulnerable young people and adults to move drugs and cash.

Shutting down these phone lines will effectively reduce the gang's ability to deal drugs and will hamper their operation. Ultimately we hope this disruption will render the county lines operational model ineffective. The power will provide a vital tool for the police when the anonymous nature of the deal line means it is not possible to identify and charge the phone owner and bring a criminal prosecution. Successful disruption of this criminal model will have significant societal benefits helping to protect the vulnerable children and adults targeted and criminally exploited by county lines gangs.

#### **9. Brief Statement of Grounds**

The UK requires these regulations to compel communication providers to disconnect mobile phone lines used to deal drugs. There is currently no existing legal power to compel communication providers to close down identified phone lines used for drug dealing. Following early consultation with communication providers it was concluded that voluntary closure of the phone lines was not possible and that the decision to close down a



phone line used to deal drugs should lie with the courts, providing the communication providers with clear legal basis to take action. The creation of the DDTRO, via legislation, was required to address the operational requirement of the police and supports them in tackling this type of criminality. The regulations will extend to the whole of the UK and will impact communication providers based in the UK.

#### 10. Reference Documents - Basic Texts

No Basic Text exists

#### 11. Invocation of the Emergency Procedure

Yes

#### 12. Grounds for the Emergency

The police estimate there are currently in excess of 200 drug dealing phone lines operating in the UK. Each phone number has the potential to be used by hundreds of drug users and to facilitate thousands of deals. The frequency and volume of drug supply this generates is a key driver for why young and vulnerable people are used and exploited by the gangs behind this crime. Exploited individuals are often subject to threats of violence, intimidation, debt bondage. Gangs have also been known to take over the homes of vulnerable people using them as a local base for their drug dealing activity. Failure to introduce the regulations to Parliament as soon as possible after Parliament resumes in September gives rise to a significant public safety and protection of minors risk and delays the impact of the new powers and the ability to protect the most vulnerable in our society. Remotely closing down these deal lines will quickly and effectively disrupt the criminal gangs' ability to deal drugs, stopping the 24 hour drug supply enabled by this crime model. This, in turn, will reduce the incentive and need to groom and exploit children and vulnerable people to carry the drugs and cash supporting this model of drug dealing. Thereby protecting the most vulnerable people and children in society from being exploited by these criminal gangs.

#### 13. Confidentiality

No

#### 14. Fiscal measures

No

#### 15. Impact assessment

Yes

#### 16. TBT and SPS aspects

TBT aspect

No - The draft is not a technical regulation nor a conformity assessment

SPS aspect

No - The draft is not a sanitary or phytosanitary measure



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
GROWTH DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

**Single Market for goods**  
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European Commission

Contact point Directive (EU) 2015/1535

Fax: +32 229 98043

email: [grow-dir2015-1535-central@ec.europa.eu](mailto:grow-dir2015-1535-central@ec.europa.eu)