



Press release

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Bundesnetzagentur takes action against children's watches with "eavesdropping" function

Jochen Homann: "Children's environment must be protected"

The Bundesnetzagentur prohibits the sale of children's watches that have an "eavesdropping" function and has already taken action against several offers on the internet.

"Parents can use these children's watches to listen in to the child's surroundings without detection via an app. The watches are regarded as unauthorised transmitting equipment," said Jochen Homann, Bundesnetzagentur President. "Our investigations found, for example, that parents were using them to eavesdrop on teachers in lessons."

Prohibited listening devices

A large of providers offer children's smart watches including an "eavesdropping" function on the German market. They are aimed at children aged between 5 and 12.

The watches have a SIM card and limited telephony function that are set up and controlled using an app. This kind of listening function is often described as a monitor. The app user is able to make the watch call a desired number unnoticed by its wearer or those nearby. The user can then eavesdrop on the wearer's conversations and surroundings. This type of listening function is prohibited in Germany.

Action against buyers

The Bundesnetzagentur advises schools, in particular, to be even more aware of pupils owning watches with a listening function. If the Bundesnetzagentur has knowledge of the buyers of such devices, it tells them to destroy the watches and send evidence of this to the authority. It is recommended for parents to take responsibility for destroying the devices themselves and to keep proof of this.

Information about providing proof of destruction if requested by the Bundesnetzagentur may be found at:

www.bundesnetzagentur.de/spionagekamas.

This page also includes an overview of product groups classed as unauthorised transmitting equipment under German law.