

# Shopping online & overseas

## A guide for consumers buying radiocommunications products

Thinking about buying a radiocommunications device online or while overseas?

This fact sheet provides you with advice on how to avoid the pitfalls so that the product you buy can be legally used in Australia.



### What is a radiocommunications product?

A radiocommunications product is any type of device that communicates wirelessly. These products are widely used in Australia. They include items such as cordless phones, wireless broadband modems and routers, wireless microphones and handheld two-way radios.

### Why should I be careful about what I buy?

**You could put lives at risk**—If you buy a product which is not intended for use in Australia it could operate on the wrong frequency and may block or disrupt important communications systems, like those used by emergency services.

**You could be out of pocket**—If you buy a dodgy device from overseas, it's possible you won't get your money back.

**You could receive a visit from ACMA inspectors**—Inspectors investigate and locate the source of interference to licensed radiocommunications services. Their enquiries might lead to your doorstep. The consequences can be serious.

All radiocommunications products are subject to the requirements of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*. There are various offences under this Act that could apply to the unlawful operation or possession of a radiocommunications device.

## What do I need to do?

Make sure you STOP, THINK and QUESTION before you buy. Use these simple tips:

### 1. Research the product

Can it be legally used in Australia? Seeking other information to that provided by the seller may alert you to potential issues with the product.

In addition to any online searches conducted, visit the ACMA website, which has detailed information on many devices, including high-risk items like **mobile phone and GPS jammers**, **illegal mobile phone repeaters** and **mobile phone boosters**.

Is the deal too good to be true? If the product is far cheaper than known reputable brands, it may not operate as intended.

### 2. Suss out the seller

Sellers (or their suppliers) must meet a range of **technical and compliance requirements** before selling a radiocommunications device in Australia—but not all sellers comply.

Can you identify where the seller is located? Devices made for overseas markets may use the incorrect frequency in Australia and interfere with important services.

Does the seller look reputable? Only buy from websites that you know and trust. Check recommendations and feedback from other customers.

### 3. Question the seller

If you're unsure if the device can be lawfully used, ask the seller if it meets Australian regulatory requirements and can be used in Australia. Be wary if the seller does not adequately address your questions or concerns.

It's your decision whether or not to buy the product. But before you enter those credit card details, think about the potential consequences and why you should be careful.

## What is the role of the ACMA?

The laws administered by the ACMA seek to ensure that radiocommunications products supplied in Australia operate on the correct frequencies, meet safe electromagnetic energy (EME) emission limits set by ARPANSA, and meet the electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) requirements so that other devices are not unintentionally interfered with.

The ACMA does not regulate product safety (injury, illness and death caused by unsafe goods). Information on electrical safety matters is available from state and territory energy regulators. More advice on product safety is available from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's **Product Safety website**.



## More information

- > Check our website: [www.acma.gov.au/Citizen/Consumer-info/All-about-spectrum/High-risk-devices](http://www.acma.gov.au/Citizen/Consumer-info/All-about-spectrum/High-risk-devices)
- > Follow us on [Twitter @acma\\_operations](https://twitter.com/acma_operations)