



Press release

Bonn, 4 January 2018

The Bundesnetzagentur blocked about 460,000 unsafe electrical devices in 2017

Jochen Homann: "A lot of unsafe products come from East Asia"

In 2017 the Bundesnetzagentur removed from the market about 460,000 products on offer on the internet that could cause radio frequency interference or electromagnetic incompatibility.

"There has been a continuing trend in recent years for many unsafe products to reach the German market via the internet. Many of these products come from East Asia. We put a stop to the sale of unsafe products even if retailers do not cooperate with us," explained Jochen Homann, Bundesnetzagentur President and added, "Our market surveillance contributes to consumer protection and also has a preventive effect."

Monitoring internet trade

In 2017 the Bundesnetzagentur put a stop to 665 offers of unsafe products because they could cause radio frequency interference or electromagnetic incompatibility. Overall approximately 460,000 products were affected. The trend of recent years for many unsafe products to be offered over the internet continues. In 2016, some 537 offers were stopped but the number of affected products was higher because 744,000 FM transmitters were among the products banned from sale.

The 460,000 affected products included 388,000 wireless headphones that use police radio frequencies required for security purposes and are therefore not allowed to be operated in Germany.

The Bundesnetzagentur is also stepping up its use of anonymous test purchases so it can check products that are not provided voluntarily. It has examined 52 products obtained in this way. All of them display anomalies and marketing of them on the respective platforms has therefore been stopped. This has affected a total of 14,700 devices such as drones, smart home and LED products.

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Cooperation with customs authorities

Consumers are ordering more and more products online directly from non-EU countries, so the Bundesnetzagentur works closely with customs authorities.

In 2017 customs authorities notified the Bundesnetzagentur of 16,000 suspicious imports covering a total of about 240,000 products. In 88% of these cases, the products were not released onto the European market.

The proportion of non-compliant products therefore remains at a consistently high level. The customs authorities had reported more than 10,000 suspicious imports in 2016, amounting to approximately 270,000 products.

Surveillance in the German retail market

The Bundesnetzagentur tested about 3,000 products in the German retail market in 2017, around 1,000 of which also underwent technical checks in the laboratory. As a result, official market-restricting measures were introduced in about 800 cases.

More information about the market surveillance conducted by the Bundesnetzagentur can be found under www.bundesnetzagentur.de/marktueberwachung. In addition, consumers can find out about specific products on the information and communication system for the pan-European market surveillance: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/icsms/>.

The Bundesnetzagentur has a touring exhibition in which it shows products that have been removed from the market. Current details of the exhibition can be found under www.bundesnetzagentur.de/wanderausstellung.

The Bundesnetzagentur is an authority under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Its core tasks include supervising the energy, telecommunications, postal and railway markets.

As part of its mandate, the Bundesnetzagentur ensures that as many undertakings as possible can use the infrastructure in these sectors so that consumers benefit from competition and favourable prices.

The authority employs over 2,900 people at its headquarters in Bonn and Mainz and its 46 regional offices.