

S.Africa won't tap into Blackberry smartphones: ministry

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South Africa's communication ministry on Thursday said it would not regulate Blackberry smartphone's encrypted messenger service to help catch criminals.

Earlier this week, deputy minister Obed Bapela told a telecommunications conference that Blackberry messenger service (BBM) posed a [security risk](#) that the government needed to "address with urgency".

But ministry spokeswoman Pearl Seopela said government was still working on its cyber policy review.

"Government has no intention to intercede or interfere with the privacy of communications between private citizens for lawful purposes," she said in a statement.

Bopela reportedly said that criminals were using BBM to plan and execute crimes, and that government wanted to "review BBM like in the UK and Saudi Arabia".

Messages on the smartphone, made by Canadian company [Research in Motion](#), are encrypted, in contrast to social networks like Twitter.

South Africa already required mobile phone SIM cards to be registered to allow authorities to track and trace them during criminal investigations.

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