

S.African police may tap into Blackberry smartphones

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Deputy communications minister Obed Bapela said the Blackberry messenger service (BBM) posed a [security risk](#) that the government needed to "address with urgency", Sapa news agency reported.

"There is evidence that criminals are now using BBM to plan and execute crime. We want to review BBM like in the UK and [Saudi Arabia](#)," Bapela told delegates attending a Southern Africa Telecommunication

Networks and Applications Conference in East London on Monday, the agency reported.

According to the financial daily newspaper Business Day the minister stressed "the high level of criminal threat" in South Africa, where there are on average 46 murders a day, a rate eight times higher than in the United States.

The smartphone manufactured by the Canadian company [Research in Motion](#) is encrypted in contrast to social networks like Twitter.

South Africa already has legislation called the Regulation of Interception of Communication Act under which all South Africans are required to register their mobile phone SIM cards or risk being disconnected.

Once registered, Sim cards can be tracked and traced to help investigations when crimes had been committed.

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