

Kenyataan Media

Press Release

For Immediate Release

NUMBER OF FAKE CALLS TO 999 STILL ALARMING

Cyberjaya, 14 September 2009 – The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM) would like to remind the public that abuse on 999 Emergency Service is an offence under section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (CMA 1998) and if convicted, the offender can be fined up to RM50,000 or imprisoned for a term not exceeding one year or both. SKMM has to date prosecuted two cases in court and there are still 25 cases under investigation.

In addition to this, SKMM has directed all telecommunication service providers to take action to suspend and terminate lines that are found to make repeated fake calls to 999 Emergency Service. Since May 2009, 257 telephone lines have been suspended and 68 telephone lines have been terminated.

In October 2008, a single number 999 for all emergency services was launched, integrating all emergency call numbers such as 991, 993 and 994. The establishment of a single emergency number makes it easier for the general public to seek for emergency services, either from the Police, Fire Department, Hospital and Civil Defense.

This service is provided to all fixed line and mobile telephone services. Mobile telephone users can also dial 112, as this is the internationally

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recommended emergency number for mobile telephone service. The emergency call center, Malaysian Emergency Response Centre 999, have also undergone facilities improvement with the main target of no dropped calls and all calls are to be answered within 10 seconds.

Unfortunately, the incidents of people making false or fake calls have affected the emergency service. The Commission would like to remind the public not to abuse 999 Emergency Service and should only use the service for emergency cases to avoid congestion and depriving those in real need of assistance. Abuse on this service would result in inefficiencies which could result in loss of property and even worse, lives.

Despite the campaigns and advertisements in the electronic and print media to stop this menace, the report for the month of June 2009 indicates that out of 1,073,722 incoming calls received by the 999 Malaysian Emergency Response Centre, 685,516 calls or 63.84% were fake calls. Although the percentage of fake calls has continuously decreased, the statistics point that the abuse is still considerably high and imposes a serious burden on emergency services.

The following has been identified as the biggest contributor of the fake calls:

- a) Children; and
- b) Telecommunication dealers.

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SKMM would like to urge all parents and guardians to monitor the use of telephone at home by their children. In addition, SKMM has found that mobile phone dealers are also misusing 999 Emergency Service by dialing 999 to check activation status of new SIM cards sold by them. Dealers are strongly warned not to use 999 Emergency Service for testing purpose and stern enforcement action will be taken against those found to have misused this service.

The public is also encouraged to cooperate with us by reporting any misuse of 999 numbers to SKMM. Complaints and information regarding abuse on 999 Emergency Service can be made to Biro Aduan SKMM by calling us at 1-800-888-030 or email to aduanskmm@cmc.gov.my.

[End]

Notes to Editor:

¹ If your organization wishes to include a quote from Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM) in an article or news item, kindly attribute the quote to our organization (SKMM) rather than an officer of the organization, unless a designated spokesperson from SKMM is specified in the Press Release or reply to Press.

About Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM)

The primary role of SKMM is to implement and promote the Government's national policy objectives for the communications and multimedia sector. SKMM is also charged with overseeing the new regulatory framework for the converging industries of telecommunications, broadcasting and on-line activities, in accordance with the

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national policy objectives set out in the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (CMA), as well as postal services and digital certifications.

The CMA provides that SKMM undertakes a policy implementation role, while policy decision-making is vested with the Minister. The Minister may also give policy directions to the Commission.

For more information visit <http://www.skmm.gov.my>

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