Towards the end of June the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced from Washington DC plans to issue the largest fine in its history against CTS Technology Co., Limited, a Chinese electronics manufacturer and online retailer, for allegedly marketing 285 models of signal jamming devices to US consumers for more than two years.

The FCC applied the maximum fine allowed to each jammer model allegedly marketed by CTS resulting in a planned fine of $34,912,500.

Said Travis LeBlanc, Acting Chief of the Enforcement Bureau, “All companies, whether domestic or foreign, are banned from marketing illegal jammers in the US. Signal jammers present a direct danger to public safety, potentially blocking the communications of first responders. Operating a jammer is also illegal, and consumers who do so face significant civil and criminal penalties.”

CTS operates a website that markets consumer electronics to individuals in the United States, where it allegedly misled US consumers by falsely claiming that certain signal jammers were approved by the FCC. In fact, the use of such devices by US consumers is illegal under any circumstance. CTS also sold ten high-powered signal jammers to undercover FCC personnel.

In addition to the planned $34,912,500 fine, the Commission is ordering CTS to cease marketing illegal signal jammers to US consumers and provide information to the FCC about any persons and entities in the United States that purchased its devices.

Signal jamming devices or jammers are radio frequency transmitters that intentionally block, jam, or interfere with authorized communications, such as cellphone calls, GPS systems, Wi-Fi networks, and first responder communications. It is a violation of federal law to market, sell, import, or use a signal jammer in the United States and its territories, except in very limited circumstances involving federal law enforcement.

In a statement issued at the time visitors to the FCC website at www.fcc.gov were invited to report the sale or use of an illegal jammer to the Commission’s Enforcement Bureau through the FCC online complaint portal or a call to 1-888-CALL-FCC (or 1-888-225-5322).
Furthermore they were invited to voluntarily relinquish a signal jammer by e-mailing: jammerinfo@fcc.gov

Additional information, including the FCC Consumer Alert on the jamming prohibitions and the FCC Enforcement Advisory to retailers regarding the marketing of illegal signal jammers, is available at www.fcc.gov/jammers