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Minister for Corrections  
Minister for Emergency Services  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW PRISON CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL MOBILE PHONES**

Minister for Corrections David Elliott and Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) Commissioner Peter Severin today announced a new crackdown on contraband mobile phones in prisons, including new detection equipment and the expansion of phone jamming.

By the end of this year, all maximum and medium security prisons will have a full body scanner capable of detecting switched off mobile phones concealed within a body cavity.

Regional units of the Security Operations Group (SOG) will also receive one of the scanners – which are portable and look like a metal pole - for use during contraband operations at all prisons.

In addition, Lithgow Correctional Centre will extend its use of phone jamming for three years. A second prison will also introduce the technology for a period of two years, pending consultation and final determination from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

“Mobile phones are a threat to the security of the prison and community safety because they can be used to facilitate crime on the outside,” Mr Elliott said.

“As phones get smaller and easier to hide, better technology is required to find them and these full body scanners will be an important tool for prison staff.”

The SOG uses teams of officers and K9s, including a mobile phone sniffer dog, to carry out random and targeted searches of prisoners, visitors, cells and all common areas. Prison officers seized 320 mobile phones in NSW prisons during 2014/15.

“Mobile phones are a challenge for prison systems across the world. The use of phone jamming technology at Lithgow is the first time it has been used at a prison in Australia,” Commissioner Severin said.

“We believe effective jamming technology is the ultimate answer because even if an inmate can smuggle a mobile phone into the prison, it will be worthless.”

ACMA needs to grant CSNSW an exemption to laws prohibiting the use of jamming technology for the jamming to take place. At the request of CSNSW, ACMA is considering Goulburn as the site of the second exemption to start next year.