

Lawmakers Mull Ban on Foreign Smartphones for Officials

By [The Moscow Times](#)

December 09, 2013



Security concerns could force Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich to start using a locally made device. **Denis Abramov**

Lawmakers will consider making officials get rid of foreign-made smartphones like the iPhone and instead use the Russian-made Yotaphone over concerns that communication gadgets made abroad may not be secure, Izvestia reported Monday.

Anxious over potential government security breaches from the use of smartphones, a Federation Council commission will analyze the vulnerability of contemporary communication gadgets with the intention of making officials get rid of mobile phones manufactured abroad, newspaper Izvestia reported Monday.

Several lawmakers raised questions about the security of foreign-made telephones, implying they would more easily be hacked or spied on than a Russian-made device.

"There will always be distrust toward smartphone manufacturers. Whoever makes the technology can also eavesdrop on it," State Duma Deputy Vadim Dengin said.

"I would easily give up [my] smartphone in favor of a domestic smartphone designed specifically for us and by us. In this regard, I have high hopes for Yotaphone."

The twin-screened Yotaphone, which features a full-color LCD screen on one side and a black-and-white electronic paper display on the other, was launched last week by Russian technology firm Yota.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, a well-known Apple fan, has already begun using the Yotaphone, the country's first domestically produced smartphone. He told reporters last week that he hoped it would be better protected from spying activities than the iPhone.

Technology security has recently come to the forefront of global government attention amid media revelations that U.S. security agencies monitored the telephone conversations of dozens of world leaders, leading to distrust on the part of some Russian officials with regards to American technology.

U.S. President Barack Obama recently said he was not allowed to have an iPhone for security reasons.

Conservative lawmaker Vitaly Milonov warned officials in September against using Apple's new iPhone 5s, saying the device's fingerprint-recognition security measure could enable prints being stored in U.S. intelligence agency databases.

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