

# **DRAFT**



## **Barbados Use of Satellite Telephone Policy**

**Policy in accordance with sections 4 (2)(b) and 4 (2)(f) of the Telecommunications Act 2001-36.**

This document summarizes the technology and sets regulation for the use of satellite telephones in Barbados, as established by The Ministry Responsible for Telecommunications in The Ministry Of Energy and Public Utilities.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

A satellite telephone is a special kind of mobile telephone that is designed to permit voice and data transmission via satellite. This category of telephone allow users to make and receive calls from anywhere on the globe. In addition to voice calls, most satellite phones are also capable of sending and receiving emails and text messages. Over the last few years the use of satellite telephones has been on the increase, they are now cheaper and more available that any time in the past.

### **2. SCOPE**

Unlike most other mobile telephones, satellite telephones do not rely on cell towers and cell sites that require cell stations every few kilometres. Satellite telephones generally complement existing cellular networks, especially in sparsely populated regions where it is not commercially feasible to build telecommunications infrastructure, these telephones are of great benefit.

Some hybrid mobile telephones can use either satellites or conventional cellular Networks. This type of service will help to bridge the gap many users experience when they roam from one city to another and suddenly lose their connection.

The geographical independency of satellite telephones more often than not result in reliable and consistent coverage. However because a clear line of sight is essential between the antenna and satellite, performance can also be affected by poor weather, and use is generally restricted to the outdoor.

One of the key things to consider when calling a satellite telephone is that you

may have to dial an international access code to get through. That also means that you may have to pay long distance charges even though the person you are calling may be in the same area. This will require the use of equal/indirect access which has not yet been approved

Nevertheless there are other important issues related to the use of the use of satellite telephones that need consideration. Because these satellites beam the signals directly to the telephones, they avoid the local wired and cellular networks. As a consequence, companies granted licences to provide local and International calls in that country will not be getting any revenue from these calls. As we do not have any registered Satellite Network Providers in this country, using a satellite telephone amounts to a bypassing of the local licensed Service Providers networks, which in Barbados, is illegal. A position paper on Bypass is presently awaiting cabinet discussion.

As a result the Ministry Responsible for Telecommunications decrees that Satellite telephones should only be permitted and used in Barbados in the event of an national emergency where all other telephone communications are out of action.

### **3 Regulations**

It is proposed that any individual or organisation desirous of using a satellite telephone in Barbados for emergency purposes must first apply to the Ministry Responsible for Telecommunications. Successful applicants will then be granted permission to bring the telephone into the country. Accordingly the telephone will be then be registered as a telecommunications device that should only be used in times of a national emergency, such as in the event of a hurricane, or any other major disaster where all other means of telephone communications are inoperable.

**Prepared by the Ministry Responsible for Telecommunications  
8 July 2005**