



Guidelines for Satellite Phones

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**Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority
Royal Government of Bhutan
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1. Introduction

A satellite phone ('sat phone') is a mobile phone that helps you communicate by connecting to orbiting satellites instead of terrestrial cell phone towers. These phones are quite commonly used during disaster and emergencies for search and rescue operations particularly in geographically 'difficult' places where normal cell phones are not able to operate. Even though satellite phones can be useful for travelers and during times of emergencies yet in certain countries the use of satellite phones is either restricted or completely banned probably due to the threat of terrorism.

In consideration of the benefits as well as a host of issues associated with satellite phones, the Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority issues these guidelines for use of satellite phones in Bhutan. The use of satellite phones in Bhutan shall be governed by these guidelines issued as per the provisions of section 58 of Information, Communication and Media (ICM) Act of Bhutan, 2018.

2. Objective

These guidelines are issued to provide clarity to organizations and individuals particularly visitors on the laws that govern the import and use of satellite phones in Bhutan.

3. Conditions for import and use of satellite phones

3.1 The import of satellite phones into the country shall be permitted only with prior permission from the Authority.

3.2 Import and use of satellite phones shall be allowed only to the following:

- a) Government agencies associated with national security, disaster management and medical emergencies.
- b) Embassies and international organizations officially stationed in the country.
- c) Aviation sector requiring emergency communication facility.
- d) During the official visit of state-guest.
- e) Local tour companies for its clients.

3.3 For the purpose of subsection 3.2 (d) and (e) above, the use of satellite phone is time bound and shall be re-exported.

3.4 The Authority shall determine the type of satellite phone that may be used within the Country based on national priorities, government policies and industry trends.

3.5 The Authority shall cancel the permit or confiscate the satellite phone whichever is applicable in the event of an inappropriate or illegal usage. The applicant shall be denied the opportunity of using satellite phone in future in case of violation.

4. Procedure for obtaining permit from the Authority

4.1 The application for import and use of satellite phones must be applied to the Authority as per the application form in Annexure 1 of the guidelines. The application shall be accompanied by an undertaking letter as prescribed in Annexure 2 of the guideline.

4.2 The application form shall be accompanied with an administrative fee of Nu. 2500.00 per phone. However, the Authority shall exempt this fee for subsection 3.2 (a) and (d) above.

5. Obligation of satellite phone permit holder

After obtaining the permit from the Authority, the permit holder shall:

- a) Not share or hire out the satellite phone to any other organization or individual.
- b) Not change the type of satellite phone without prior approval of the Authority.
- c) Inform the Authority if the permit holder plans to terminate the use of the satellite phone.
- d) Submit any information sought by the Authority.
- e) Cooperate with the Authority on any matters related to satellite phones and in the enforcement of these guidelines.

Annexure 1: Application form for import or use of satellite phones

Name of the individual/organization:		
Address:		
Details of the Applicant;		
Name of an applicant :	Designation:	Nationality:
CID/Passport No:	Date of issue:	Date of expiry:
Mobile No :	Telephone No: Fax No:	Email ID:
Details of the Contact person:		
Name of the contact person:	Designation:	Nationality:
CID/Passport No:	Date of issue :	Date of expiry:
Mobile No:	Telephone No: Fax No:	Email ID:
Letter of consent from the relevant Agency		
Please tick one: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Purpose of use :		
Details of satellite Phone :	Type: Model Number: SIM number: IMEI number:	
Frequency range :		
Period of utilization:		
Name of the Satellite phone service providers with address and contact details.		

Name:

Seal of the organization

Signature of the applicant

Date of application:

Annexure 2: Letter of undertaking

I/We (Name of the head of the organization) of
.....(Name of the organization) do hereby declare and
undertake;

1. That all information provided in the application are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and that the satellite phone shall be utilized as per the guideline provided by the Authority.

2. To inform and update the Authority on any change in the type of satellite phone as well as other information as and when required by the Authority.

Name:

Seal of Head of the organization

Signature

Date: