



18 February 2005

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters
From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services
Subject: **Mobile communication devices for official work**

1. The Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) offers mobile communication services to the departments of the United Nations Secretariat in New York. The purpose of the present information circular is to clarify the procedures relating to the use of these mobile communication services. For the present, mobile communication devices include pagers, cellular phones and multi-function handheld devices (such as the Blackberry). While the use of pagers and cellular phones is common, the Blackberry is a relatively newer multi-purpose device that can be used as a cellular phone, a personal digital assistant and a wireless device for accessing the Lotus Notes e-mail application (including calendar and address book).

Approval for mobile communication devices

2. Mobile communication devices are provided by the United Nations to its personnel to facilitate their work, with the type of device to be provided depending on the nature of the work being carried out. Heads of departments or offices (or one or more of their designated representatives) should identify which staff require operational support or other on-demand functions and decide who should be authorized to use mobile communication devices. In view of the financial implications of the supply and continuing use of a mobile communication device, the issue of such a device, as well as the termination of such service, must be approved by a certifying officer of the department or office (in most cases the Executive Officer).

Ordering procedure

3. Orders for mobile communication devices should be prepared using the standard form for each device. Such forms should be forwarded to ITSD through the Executive Office. The certifying officers will be responsible for ensuring that funds are available in the respective budgets for the initial and continuing charges for mobile communication services as well as for the proper recording of those charges

* The present information circular shall remain in effect until further notice.

against the respective accounts. Forms ITSD.12, ITSD.14 and ITSD.15 must be used to request Blackberries, cellular phones and pagers, respectively. All forms are available on the Intranet (iSeek) in the "Forms" section under the category Information Technology.

4. The requesting office should choose the carrier and the plan that best fits its needs. Information about the devices, carriers and plans are posted on the Intranet (iSeek) under "Information Technology Services" under the entry "Communications and Office Equipment". Choosing the appropriate plan level is crucial if cost overruns are to be avoided. ITSD will assist requesting offices in the choice of carriers and plans, taking into consideration the quality of service in given areas where the devices are likely to be most used.

Responsibilities of requesting offices

5. The requesting office should maintain an inventory of all mobile communication devices supplied to its personnel and should be responsible for transmitting the mobile contact numbers to those who need to contact such personnel. Requesting offices should evaluate their lists periodically, at a minimum, not less than once every six months. They should also ensure that information regarding the termination of service is communicated promptly to ITSD, through the Executive Office.

Responsibilities of users

6. Recipients of mobile communication devices will be responsible for their proper use, including compliance with local or national laws and regulations, such as those prohibiting or restricting their use while driving or on an airplane. In the event that such a device is lost, users should immediately report the loss to the unit within ITSD that dealt with the original service request in order to prevent unauthorized usage. The Executive Office should also be informed as soon as possible thereafter.

Billing procedures

7. ITSD will charge requesting offices for the actual usage of the mobile communication device, as well as for administrative and maintenance expenses. The details of these charges and the billing procedures are explained on the Intranet (iSeek) under "Information Technology Services", under the entries "Communications and Office Equipment", and "Billing". User departments will be billed on a monthly basis for full reimbursement of all charges resulting from the use of mobile communication devices. Certifying officers should, therefore, ensure that these expenditures are properly charged to specific account codes. They shall also ensure that charges for personal calls are recovered from the user, whenever the plan minimum (the free allowance for each plan) is exceeded.

8. User departments should be aware that no additional funds will be provided from the regular budget for the 2004-2005 biennium to cover the cost of these services.

Technical assistance

9. For all questions regarding mobile communication devices, please contact the Services Coordination Section/ITSD using: Lotus Notes e-mail to ITSD Requests-for-Service/NY/UNO; Internet e-mail to itservices@un.org; or telephone, 1-212-963-2040.
