



ANY REPLY OR SUBSEQUENT REFERENCE  
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE FINANCIAL  
SECRETARY AND THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE  
NUMBER QUOTED:-

Telephone No. 92-28600-16  
Website: <http://www.mof.gov.jm>  
Email: [info@mof.gov.jm](mailto:info@mof.gov.jm)

MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING  
30 NATIONAL HEROES CIRCLE  
P.O. BOX 512  
KINGSTON  
JAMAICA

January 13, 2006

**Circular No. 7**  
**File No. 451/016**  
**Division: Public Expenditure Policy Co-ordination**

Permanent Secretaries  
Heads of Departments and Agencies

**Re: Use of Government Telephones**

Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments and Agencies are hereby advised of the following procedures for the use of telephones (land lines) in Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

Recent changes in the billing system of Cable and Wireless Jamaica Limited have resulted in increased call charges. These changes make it imperative for Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure that adequate measures are taken to monitor and control telephone use to prevent abuse and to minimize costs.

**Personal Calls**

Public officers shall use Government provided communications equipment and services for official business, but may be used to make or receive personal calls during duty hours provided that:

- a) the calls do not adversely affect the performance of employees' official duties or the organization's work performance;
- b) they are of a reasonable duration and frequency; and
- c) the calls could not reasonably have been made or received during non-duty hours.

**Identification of Private Calls**

Where feasible a system (e.g. Audix) should be put in place and each employee assigned a unique authorization code. This code will link each employee to the calls that he/she has made in a particular period. The employee can then determine and indicate clearly which calls were made for official purposes and those for private purposes.

In the event that the implementation of such a system is not feasible, a record of all private calls made must be maintained showing the:

- number called;
- date and time of the call; and
- name of the officer making the call.

#### **Cost Recovery for Private Calls**

Employees making personal calls (including overseas calls and calls to cellular telephones) must be charged for the cost of the call including General Consumption Tax. Therefore, a system should be implemented to ensure that, on receipt of each telephone bill from the service provider, employees are called upon to identify and pay the associated charges relating to all their private calls.

The cost must be recovered by payment to the cashier by the end of the month following the billing period. In the event that an employee fails to make payment in the time stipulated this information must be forwarded to the Accounts Department (payroll section) for recovery through a "one-time" salary deduction.

#### **Collect Calls**

Public officers must not accept collect calls for business or personal purposes in the absence of prior written approval by the Permanent Secretary, Head of Department or Chief Executive Officer.

#### **Overseas Calls**

Public officers who wish to make private overseas calls should first obtain the permission of their respective department heads. This should be clearly recorded in a toll call register before the call is put through.

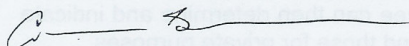
#### **Private Lines**

The assignment of private lines (straight lines) to certain employees must not be viewed as a right or benefit attached to a job or position. Private lines may only be assigned in instances where it can be demonstrated that assigning this line to an employee will be to the benefit of the organization concerned. The Permanent Secretary, Head of Department or Chief Executive Officer must authorize this assignment.

#### **Cellular Telephones**

This circular does not supersede *Circular No. 7, dated March 15, 1996*, which relates to the use of government issued cellular telephones. Notwithstanding this, Ministries, Department and Agencies must employ mechanisms to ensure that private call charges are paid by public officers.

Please ensure that employees are made aware of the contents and implications of the directives contained in this circular.



Colin Bullock  
Financial Secretary