

18.17 COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

- 18.17.1 Government provides communication facilities to public officers for a quality and timely service delivery to the public. Such facilities as fixed telephone, mobile phone, fax and internet facilities are available for public officers at their workplace and residence.
- 18.17.2 The grant of communication facilities to public officers is based on their status, nature of work and posting, and such provision rests upon the Responsible Officer.

Mobile Phone and Fixed Telephone Facilities

- 18.17.3 The provision of facilities related to mobile phone and fixed telephone is outlined in the given table:

Mobile Phone	Fixed Telephone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free use of mobile phone • Unlimited/limited call entitlement • Prepaid cards • Free rental • Roaming facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free rental • Unlimited/limited call entitlement

Recommendation 1

- 18.17.4 We recommend that the provision in respect of mobile phone and fixed telephone as enunciated above should continue to be devolved on the Management of Ministries/Departments/Organisations.**

Fax and Internet Facilities

- 18.17.5 Fax facilities at work place is a common working tool for most public officers. However, only certain senior public officials at the level of Senior Chief Executive and Permanent Secretary are granted fax facilities at their place of residence depending on their posting or the very specific nature of their functions.
- 18.17.6 Internet facilities are provided to an increasing number of public officers at their place of work for a fast and greater accessibility of information. Internet facilities are also provided to a certain category of officers at their place of residence through a monthly internet allowance of Rs 500. These facilities are made available to officers when they are required to:
- (i) regularly interact from residence with international organisations outside office hours due to the difference in time zone;

- (ii) access from home and outside working hours a server situated at the office or away from home; and
- (iii) regularly carry out significant research from home for meeting deadlines.

Recommendation 2

18.17.7 We recommend that officers should be granted internet facilities when they satisfy the conditions set out at paragraph 18.17.6.

18.17.8 We also recommend that Ministries/Departments/Organisations should seek the prior authority of the MCSAR before granting fax and internet facilities to an officer.

Control Mechanism

18.17.9 Communication devices should be used by officers for the benefit of users of the public service. In order to avoid inappropriate and/or excessive use of these facilities, management of Ministries/Departments/Organisations should put in place an appropriate control system.

Recommendation 3

18.17.10 We recommend that Management of Ministries/Departments/Organisations should set up a control mechanism for the grant of communication facilities so as to ensure that inappropriate and/or excessive use of such facilities are prevented through adequate processes/procedures.

Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities

18.17.11 Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities generally grant communication facilities to their staff based on the policies and guidelines of the Civil Service.

Recommendation 4

18.17.12 We recommend that Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities should continue to grant communication facilities to eligible officers based on the Civil Service pattern.
