

## **In-flight use of mobile phones: still the exception, not the rule**

*The European Commission harmonises technical requirements, but use of mobile phones still forbidden unless otherwise specified*

The European Commission announced on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008 that national licences for in-flight mobile communication, granted to individual airlines by the Member State in which they are registered, would now be recognised throughout the EU. However, it is important that passengers understand that this does **not** mean that they can now use their mobile phones on board any flight.

Technology now exists whereby passengers can safely use their mobile phones onboard aircraft specifically equipped with an onboard cellular network, connected to the ground via satellite. Some AEA member airlines are already testing or offering this service, and this facility might become more widespread in the near future, depending on each individual airline's commercial policy; but so far it is still the exception, not the rule.

**Unless passengers are told, specifically, that they can use their mobile phone onboard a specific flight, they should follow the airline's safety instructions and switch it off from take-off to engine switch-off, lest it should interfere with navigation systems.**

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