

# THE BOTTOM LINE

... on Government Telephone Abuse

19 February 2003

Vol. 1 No. 2

## The Issue:

Telephone abuse and misuse costs taxpayers thousands of dollars a year. Many soldiers and civilians are unaware of the facts concerning appropriate government telephone use, whether they are cell phones or office Defense Switched Network (DSN) phones.

## The Facts:

Each month, USAREUR spends \$1.2 million for telephone service. \$500K is for DSN, \$500K is for 99 access, and \$200K on cell phones. DSN is not free. Telephone control officers monitor usage of government phones and are required to report abuses to commanders. Commanders' responses to abuse can range from a warning/ repayment to UCMJ action. Reasonable and limited use of DSN phones to briefly contact local schools, domicile, landlord, doctors, etc are permitted. Personal use of government cell phones is absolutely prohibited. Use of callback or 0180 services to gain greater access is prohibited. ASGs pay for 99 access and recoup costs from units. Units using authorized DSN dial-up modems to transmit data or access the Internet should evaluate leased or dedicated lines to reduce costs. Cell phone users should be aware that calls received outside home country are charged. All units and sections, down to lowest possible level, should have an officially appointed TCO and alternate. The potential to save tax dollars in this area is high.

## Tell Your Soldiers:

- Desk telephones are first and foremost for government business.
- Cell phones are for government business ONLY.
- Tracking software and reporting systems monitor all government phone usage.
- Embarrassment, letter of reprimand, reimbursement of funds, and/or UCMJ action are possible results of abuse.
- An O-5 recently paid back \$10K to government, due to out-of-country roaming charges and personal use generated on government cell phone.
- Radio Frequencies generated by cell phones can set off electrical blasting caps.

## For More Information:

For TCO training requests, or more guidance on managing unit telecommunications in USAREUR, contact Eric Melton, DSN 370-8602 or [meltone@hq.hqusareur.army.mil](mailto:meltone@hq.hqusareur.army.mil). References: Army Regulation 25-1 and Army Europe Supplement 1 to AR 25-1

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