



# Newsletter

# Telecommunication and Post

## Caribbean Netherlands

Dear reader,

This is the third Newsletter of the year 2012 by means of which the Telecom Agency keeps the inhabitants of the Caribbean Netherlands and telecommunication and postal market parties informed of sector-specific facts, events and developments.

### **Ministry of Economic Affairs**

As from November 5, 2012, the name of the ministry under which the Telecom Agency falls, has been changed from Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation into the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The minister in charge of this ministry is Minister Henk Kamp.

### **(Pleasure)craft in the Caribbean Netherlands**

Radio transmission and reception equipment on board (pleasure)craft (marine telephone) is used to communicate with other (pleasure) craft or with (limited) coastal stations. Specific frequencies have been assigned for this type of radio transmission and reception equipment. A mariphone is a transceiver that operates in the so-called VHF band (Very High Frequency band). The VHF band is located between 156MHz and 162MHz.

In the Caribbean Netherlands, persons who make use of a mariphone should hold a licence. Together with the licence, also a Call sign is assigned, which should be mentioned in communication by way of identification of the transceiver equipment.

For safety at sea, the use of a mariphone is to be recommended. The use of a mobile phone is no fully satisfactory alternative for the mariphone. By mobile phone you make contact with only one body or person per call. In addition, a mobile phone has no reach everywhere on the water. An (emergency) call by mariphone will be heard by everyone who is listening in the surrounding area. In that case the chance of help in an emergency is considerably greater. In addition, communication with the port office and craft in the neighbourhood is possible. If you have a mariphone on board, you are under an obligation to tune in and listen to channel 16 (emergency frequency) standard. It is important for everybody to tune in to the same channel, so that everyone can be accessed and heard reciprocally. When you are called by the port office, you are under an obligation to answer and to provide the information requested.

A licence for maritime radio transmission equipment on board a (pleasure) craft should be applied for at the



Telecom Agency. The application should be made by means of an application form obtainable from the Bureau Telecommunication and Post in Bonaire, which should be filled out in full and accompanied by:

- A copy of a registration card, still valid, of the craft, issued by the port office; and
- A copy of a valid ID card of the applicant (in case of a natural person), or an original extract (not older than three months) from the trade register of the Chamber of Commerce (in case of a corporate person).

In order to be permitted to operate the maritime radio transmission and reception equipment, you should hold an operation certificate prescribed for such purpose, depending on the functionality of the mariphone. You will receive such certificate upon passing the exam.

Those interested in taking Radio exams, can register with the Bureau Telecommunication and Post in Bonaire. The registration form can also be applied for at that office.

The exact dates on which the next-following exams are to be held, will be announced in local newspapers and on the websites of the Telecom Agency and the Bureau Telecommunication and Post. Persons who have registered will be informed of the date direct.

### Use of radio-electric transmission and reception equipment

In the Caribbean Netherlands, often radio-electric equipment is brought from abroad without those involved having any guarantee that it will be permitted for the equipment to be used in the BES islands.

It is important to know that in virtue of article 15, paragraph 1 of the BES Telecommunications Act, it is not permitted to install, have available, use or operate radio-electric transmission equipment, unless with authorization of the Minister.

Exceptions to article 15, paragraph 1 of the BES Telecommunications Act are radio-electric facilities for personal use at home or services for closed user-groups on their own premises. For this purpose strict rules are in force for the application (e.g., Wi-Fi equipment, wireless microphones etc.), the frequency band to be used (frequencies assigned by the Minister), bandwidth and

the power transmitted (a range of thirty meters at the most).

Radio-electric Wi-Fi equipment, for example, must not transmit with more power or in frequency bands other than as stated in the table below.

Maximum power transmitted	Frequency band
100 mWatt	2.4000 – 2.4835 GHz
50 mWatt	5.150 – 5.250 GHz

The use of a radio frequency booster, thus extending the range of, for example, Wi-Fi equipment, is prohibited.

An extensive statement including the frequencies, to be used by radio-electric transmission and reception equipment, which are permitted in the Caribbean Netherlands, will be announced on the websites of the Telecom Agency and the Bureau Telecommunication and Post.

### VHF cover between Bonaire and Curaçao

Investigations have proved that around the north-west of Bonaire and the east of Curaçao, there are gaps in the VHF cover area. At the moment a solution is being worked on, in which connection the existing VHF network of the coast guard will be renovated. The Telecom Agency requests all (pleasure)boaters to take this into account and to take extra precautions when they are boating in this area. In the meantime the coast guard units are patrolling more intensively in the eastern area of Curaçao and the north-western area of Bonaire.