



## Satellite Backup Equipment - Frequently Asked Questions

The state has deployed 228 satellite phones to counties and state agencies. The cost of the equipment and the service was from the 2009 Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grant Program. Originally planned for three years, the state was able to extend the program an additional year, in part to continue the service for the phones. The PSIC program ended on June 20, 2012.

The intention from the beginning of the grant program was for the State to absorb the costs of the service on expiration of the grant. The cost was to become part of the AWIN operating budget. Due to the economy, the AWIN operating budget has been held flat for the last three years. With no increase in the budget, there are limited funds available to support the service for the satellite phones.

The AWIN Operations and Management team has identified enough funding to provide for activation of a limited number of phones from July 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012. This limited activation allow for one unit in each jurisdiction to be active, with all other units being placed in 'sleep mode'. Sleep mode allows the phone to receive updates, but in order to use it the vendor has to be contacted to activate the phone.

**Q: Can I still use the active phone for push to talk, or will I incur charges for that service?**

A: Push to talk is still available on active phones at no additional cost.

**Q: How do I get my phone out of sleep mode?**

A: From the phone that is in sleep mode dial 6-1-1. This connects you with the manufacturer who can activate your phone. The activation time is approximately 5 minutes.

**Q: How will the State determine which phone will be active, and which will be placed in sleep mode?**

A: The County Judge will be contacted for this decision.

**Q: What happens on January 1, 2013; how much will my county or agency have to start paying?**

A: AWIN Operations and Management is currently in negotiations with the service provider on the cost. Each County Judge will receive a letter in September with the anticipated costs for their county. At that point the County Judge can make a decision on how to proceed with the service for the county.

**Q: Can Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds be used to pay for the service fee and/or maintenance on the satellite phones purchased with Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) funds?**

A: For FY 10 and FY11 HSGP this is an allowable expense but must be approved on the budget prior to expenditure as with any other use of the funds. Any maintenance fee can only extend through the end of the grant period. FY12 will be competitive and project based so this would not be allowable.

**Q: Can Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) funds be used to pay for the service fee and/or maintenance on the satellite phones purchased with Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) funds?**

A: Yes, since the PSIC grant has expired the service fee and maintenance is an allowable expense. EMPG funds are 50/50 and the invoice would need to be included with the regular quarterly expenses.

**Q: Is there a charge to activate a phone that is in sleep mode?**

A: No. There are no additional activation fees.

**Q: Can my county choose now to keep a unit active and pay the monthly charge?**

A: Yes. Contact David Baker in AWIN Operations and Management to arrange for the continued service.

