

## Tip Sheet

# Don't let global roaming ruin your holiday

Using your mobile phone overseas, known as “global roaming”, is expensive. Our advice if you are on a monthly smartphone contract is to avoid global roaming if possible. These are the **three main options** you have for staying connected while you travel:

- **Buy a local SIM card when you arrive at your overseas destination.** This will mean you pay cheap local rates and top up credit when you need to. You will need to ensure your handset is unlocked before you go (by contacting your provider) and then text your contacts when you arrive to let them know your overseas number.
- **Buy a pre-paid roaming SIM card before you go.** These pre-paid SIM cards are dedicated to roaming overseas and will generally provide cheaper rates for calls and texts. The advantage of this – as with buying a local SIM card – is that when your credit runs out, it simply runs out – you won't receive an unexpectedly high bill. There are various providers that offer pre-paid roaming SIM cards such as TravelSIM, GoSIM, RoamingSIM or GoTalk.
- **Activate global roaming with your normal provider.** Call your provider to activate global roaming (this won't happen automatically). Make sure you ask how much it costs to send an SMS (text), MMS (picture message), to make and receive phone calls and for using data (the internet). Some providers offer pre-paid data packs, which are useful if you think you might need to use data occasionally (however this is best avoided).

### When you are overseas:

#### If global roaming (via your normal provider):

- Avoid excess data charges on your smartphone by switching off the “Data Roaming” setting, which can usually be found under the Network menu.
- Stop emails automatically downloading to your phone by switching to your phone's “Manual” mode. If you don't know how, ask your provider before you go.

#### Handy tips for all travellers:

- Use free WiFi (wireless) hotspots wherever you can. Many hotels, fast food chains and libraries offer them.
- Use your phone mainly for SMS. Divert all calls to voicemail and record a message asking callers to send an SMS instead.
- Consider making international calls with online applications like Skype or Facetime (but make sure you are using a free Wi-Fi hotspot.)