

Philippines allows phone use on planes

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Aircraft of Philippine's largest budget carrier Cebu Pacific (R) and Airphilippines (L), a subsidiary of flag carrier Philippine Airlines, are parked at terminal 3 of the international airport in Manila on October 17, 2012

The Philippines' civil aviation authority said Tuesday it would allow passengers to use mobile phones and laptops to make calls and access the Internet during flights.

Civil aviation director general William Hotchkiss said the order covered "transmitting portable electronic devices".

With immediate effect, the move will allow "people on board the

aircraft conditional use of laptops, cellular phones, Internet or short-based-messaging service, voice communications and other [broadband services](#) during flights", he said in a directive.

However, devices should still be turned off pre-flight, when the aircraft is refuelling, and be switched to silent mode.

"The use of MP3s should always be with earphones and not with additional or separate speaker or amplifiers," Hotchkiss added.

The United States and the European Union have also said they will relax restrictions on the use of mobile devices on planes. However there have been concerns that allowing voice calls would cause disturbance to other passengers.

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