

CURRENT AFFAIRS

The telecom regulator mulls measures to govern quality standards for batteries in wearable devices and IoT items. **B5**

TECHNOLOGY

NBTC targets batteries in wearables

Measures to prevent consumer harm

KOMSAN TORTERMSASANA

The telecom regulator is considering measures to govern quality standards for batteries in wearable devices and Internet of Things (IoT) items in order to prevent consumer harm.

The move is part of ongoing efforts to beef up standards for batteries used in smartphones.

Yesterday the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), in collaboration with

the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) and Electrical and Electronics Institute (EEI), launched a campaign to educate consumers to look for an industrial standard mark on smartphone boxes with batteries before making purchases.

Consumers can also verify quality standards of batteries via mobile app and the

NBTC's website.

Korkij Danchaivichit, deputy secretary-general of the NBTC, said smart devices are widespread and battery safety is an important issue.

In the past few years, there have been several incidents of non-standard batteries that overheated or exploded, causing damage and injury to users.

Certain batteries are also prohibited from being carried on aeroplanes. For passengers that do carry batteries on board, there have been instances of batteries heating and emitting smoke.

The NBTC reported that there are 125 million mobile phone numbers out of a total 69.1 million people nationwide.

The most common problem in using a mobile phone is battery deterioration. Several cases were caused by incorrect use, such as using a smartphone that is being charged.

Mr Korkij said that the NBTC, in collaboration with related agencies, is strengthening measures to govern battery quality standards.

He said the regulator and related agencies will face increasingly sophisticated challenges from battery use, especially with the rise of innovative smart devices and IoT connectivity.

Mr Korkij said batteries for wearable devices will be the first category for the measures, while other innovative devices on the IoT platform have to be monitored soon.



Smart devices are widespread and battery safety is an important issue.

KORKIJ DANCHAIVICHIT
Deputy secretary-general,
NBTC



A woman checks out mobile phone accessories at Thailand Mobile Expo 2019 in Bangkok. SOMCHAI POOMLARD

IoT has only just begun circulating, with some 15,000-20,000 IoT-connected devices in market.

The regulator must initiate all related regulatory conditions to prepare for systematically governing and promoting the expected booming usage and handle increasing machine-to-machine connectivity in every industrial sector, especially when 5G wireless broadband makes its commercial debut in 2020.

Mr Korkij said the NBTC introduced tools for consumers to observe and verify which battery models have passed the standards for the year. Consumers can access the MoCheck mobile app on Android devices or go to <http://mocheck.nbt.go.th> for battery details and specifications.