

Spot Satellite Messenger

Ramy Yanetz

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Why use Spot

- Safety – in case of landout or crash
- Convenience – in case of landout
- Simplifies crewing
- Peace of mind for pilot, crew and family
- Entertainment – flying vicariously
- FBO/clubs can track their pilots
- Low cost (\$150/\$150 per year)

Misconceptions

- I don't need spot – I never crash and if I crash it is my problem
 - No, if you crash it is also our problem – your friends, family and SAR
- I have PLB/ELT so don't need spot
 - What if it is not activated or you can't press the button?
- If I can't press the button it doesn't matter
 - It matters. See first bullet. Also as long as you are not found it will delay insurance payments to your family...

Alternatives to Spot?

- Cellular devices – Barely working above 4000 feet and in the deserts
- ELT – 120Mhz no longer monitored
- ELT – 406MHZ – Expensive, not always activated
- PLB – requires manual activation
- Delorme InReach – Best alternative

Spot features

- Satellites based so always works everywhere
- Multi function:
 - Tracking mode – automatically transmits every 10 min
 - SOS button – in case of true emergency will alert SAR
 - Help button – useful to signal a landout
 - OK button – useful to signal you landed OK
 - Custom (newer generations) – custom message

Example of use

- Tracking mode – for followers on the ground
- Tracking mode – in case of crash may be very helpful to locate the crash site
- SOS button – in case of crash to call for help
- Help button – to call for retrieve
- OK button – to let wife know you landed
- Custom button – to alert crew on change in plans
- Using combination of OK/custom/help to communicate alternate messages to crew

How to use spot

- Create OK/Help/custom message online
- Designate phone numbers and email addresses to receive the messages
- Recipients receive message + google link
- Share your spot url with your family, club and SSA
- Don't forget to turn it on in tracking mode!

Spot products

- Spot 1
- Spot 2
 - Smaller
 - much better UI (separate buttons)
 - New custom message
 - Less dropped transmissions
 - Shorter battery life
- Spot 3
 - Smaller
 - Optional Shorter intervals . Additional \$50 for 5 min, additional \$150 per year for 2.5 min
 - Motion activate tracking for continuous tracking while conserving battery
 - Same price
- Spot Connect – not recommended for soaring (requires mobile phone to operate)

Tracking tools

- Online on spot web site (poor UI)
- Mobile apps (Spot shared pages)
- Multi spot page (Hawk Tracking)
- SSA tracking page

SSA Tracking site

- <http://ssa.org/sailplanetracker/default.asp>
- Works very well on desktop and mobile.
- Impressive UI using Google map. Far superior to any other tracking web site including Spot.
- Can track all gliders flying from any given airport
- Full trace from takeoff, not just current location
- Estimated speed and distance
- satellite layer and waypoints layer
- Can replay the day or any prior day by dragging the time line
- Archive of prior flights including satellite
- Need to add your spot/InReach URL to your SSA profile as public or register at <http://glideport.aero/>

Alternative to Spot – Delorme Inreach

- Pros
 - Much better UI, both on device and online
 - Altitude information
 - down to 1 min interval (based on subscription plan)
 - 2 ways text messaging using smart phone or UI.
 - More reliable and real time
 - Fully supported by SSA tracking and Hawk Tracking.
- Cons
 - Device cost \$300 (twice than spot)
 - Subscription plans cost roughly twice then Spot 2 (\$300 - \$750 depends on interval and how often you fly) more comparative to Spot 3
- Conclusion: At least twice the cost of spot 2 but much more functionality, namely much shorter intervals, altitude information and two way text messaging.
 - If you need basic security – Spot 2/3 is best
 - If you want to provide more timely and useful info to crew, family and friends – go with InReach