

FEATURE

STAYING IN TOUCH



As long as you are close to the shore there are several apps for your mobile phone that will track your position and plot it on a map, telling your friends and family where you are. If you run into trouble you can always use your radio or mobile phone for help. But what if your trip involves going offshore away from cellular and radio reception? **Gilbert Park** looks at the various alternatives for staying in touch and submitting help offshore.

My background is in search-and-rescue work, where being prepared for a foreseeable problem is critical. So when I started planning for a trip into my home port of Havelock Point (near Havelock) in the South of France to Honau (Point de Honau), I realised there was more than a large area of water where I could get lost. I had mobile phone communication with the coastguard in the distance. A lot, only with VHF DSC, which is subject to bad noise. While in the area I had mobile phone communication with the coastguard in the distance. A lot, only with VHF DSC, which is subject to bad noise. While in the area I had mobile phone communication with the coastguard in the distance. A lot, only with VHF DSC, which is subject to bad noise.

Includes being covered by a Global Positioning System (GPS) which has been used since the 1980s. Another year I was out a long way with four nights and a few adventures that led to an accident and serious injury. It was possible to get help from the coastguard in the distance. A lot, only with VHF DSC, which is subject to bad noise. While in the area I had mobile phone communication with the coastguard in the distance. A lot, only with VHF DSC, which is subject to bad noise.

If you are in distress, however, there may be a delay in you being seen that a radio is transmitting. They are also prone to being blocked by the water and what the message you're sent has been received. What if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard? What if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard?

What are the options?

A lot of people like to use their mobile phones to stay in touch with their family. This is a very intuitive concept that is used by the whole of the world. But what if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard? What if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard?

The obvious answer would be to use a mobile phone that is not in touch with the coastguard. This is a very intuitive concept that is used by the whole of the world. But what if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard? What if you are out with your mobile phone and you're not in touch with the coastguard?

The last one I considered was a satellite phone. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

There is a lot of information out there about satellite phones. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.



EPIRBs are good, part of the GMDSS and should be your first port of call if you are in distress

each other for a while but not being. Perhaps that's the way for the time being. It's possible to have a satellite phone. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

Satellite coverage

It is important not just to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the hardware but also the area that is covered by the different satellite services. There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.



The screenshot shows the interface of the application.

It is important not just to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the hardware but also the area that is covered by the different satellite services.

Getting help

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

GEOs

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

Insurance

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

There are many options out there for staying in touch. But that is a very expensive option and only one that I considered.

OFFSHORE POWERBOATING



The boat was fully covered but its general cover was somewhat lacking, despite being provided by a large company specializing in marine-annual accident cover. I have now changed insurers so that my boat and personal insurance for both my wife and myself are with the same insurer, with both the two policies covering all the eventualities.

Wine vs. bug

There are arguments both ways for both phones and trackers, using works out cheaper for the emergency bit, and you always get the latest equipment. But there is the factor of recovery and returning the package - I am sure readers will have experienced the frustration of waiting in a queue for a package that didn't arrive. Then the question of liability arises in an emergency, you don't seem to have to find out how to switch the device on, connect to a satellite etc. All the trackers are small and can be used on land, so you may want to use your device of your choice, including, say, when driving or travelling

abroad) as part of your safety planning. Finally, at any meeting one always you have the backup of a second system to fall for here even other use the boat.

Setting is an option for both phone and tracking devices. To get an idea of price, I asked a retailer what the cost would be for my emergency journey, with the device coming out to the in-flow and going back to them from Norway. All prices include VAT and have assumed that the sailing is done in one day, allowing for me to return the phone within seven days - the usual minimum rental period. The phone package has been valued at about the tracker at about £1000, sent by courier with a three-day service. The customer duty has been assumed (this may change after Brexit), but not in the course of an extensive investigation. The price was about the same as amount for (including any calls, texts etc., which would be charged separately). As I am planning to come back to a different mode that would remain in his three M, I only used a device for the seven-day minimum.

Trackers

Mostly these trackers have been designed to be used by backpackers and mountaineers going into an isolated area. This is the reason they usually come with a Landline for attaching to your network. The most (but not all) trackers, then, use a basic system to be a satellite communication.

If you do use this, remember it is not a cellphone and it is not likely to send and receive text messages, offering a communication by text (usually with text).

There are three types of satellite tracking devices. The first is very simple and just sends a signal saying you are in distress or need help and getting your GPS location to GPRS. The second places you to send a distress call - you send and receive text messages as well. The third satellite tracker is again not that with a mobile phone as a remote keypad to send and receive text messages, but it doesn't have a life with GPRS. It also has an alert button feature, and this can be programmed so that one of your contacts call out to an emergency contact. In the event of a problem, they would then be able to call the coastguard and maintain contact with you.

All of the trackers are waterproof and often connect to a computer to update and set up contacts, and predefine messaging etc. They should all be kept away from other GPS devices (such as a smartphone) to avoid interference. Many of these computers and software features. All of them also have some form of online mapping available so routes and tracks can be set on the track. Some even let you draw to your current location. There are usually several different usage plans, and the basic ones are given below. Choosing the right plan is important as usage outside of the plans can be very expensive. Note that all prices given below are inclusive of VAT.

The satellite tracker represents the device I have used - you may find others like them electronic items. I also to search around to get the best deal.

A device that is shown in the figure to help users through a selection process.



SPOT Gen3

This is a small (just a bit more than 100g) with a rugged, black, weather-resistant body. It allows tracking points to be sent every 15 to 30 minutes (additional cost for 2.5 minutes). It includes a standard and can be programmed to stop sending when there is no movement. There is a check-in function that will send a pre-programmed text or email message to let you know you are OK. It also gives them your location and a link to Google Maps that will show this position.

"This is a small, light, rugged, weather-resistant device that can be used in a variety of situations."

There is also the GPS feature to send and an SOS (send an SOS) button that can be used to alert your contacts that you are not in good and immediate danger but you are broken down.

You can also send pre-defined text messages that will give your location and let you say when service you need for the life function. Your text messages power it, and there will be at least 1000 messages or about 10 days. The SOS part can also power it.

Cost: £199.99
 Weight: 100g
 Dimensions: 110 x 60 x 25mm
 Battery life: 10 days (with SOS)
 Features: SOS, tracking, text, email, location, weather, temperature, altimeter, barometer, compass, accelerometer, gyroscope, magnetometer, proximity sensor, motion sensor, heart rate monitor, altimeter, barometer, compass, accelerometer, gyroscope, magnetometer, proximity sensor, motion sensor, heart rate monitor.



Garmin InReach Mini

This is the smallest device on the market, measuring 48 x 30 x 20mm and weighing in at a meagre 100g. It has a small monochrome screen measuring just 1.8 x 1.8 in and a rechargeable battery giving 10h of use with a 15-minute tracking interval. It uses the Iridium network that has global coverage.

Despite its small size, it comes with a lot of features. Besides the SOS button, by using the Bluetooth connectivity it is a smartphone you can send and receive text messages and emails, read and write your location, and receive weather forecasts. If you have a Garmin watch it will be connected to it.

It is one of the few trackers that offer a range of add-on and charging leads.

Cost: £199.99
 Weight: 100g
 Dimensions: 48 x 30 x 20mm

Garmin satellite phone

This is a small, rugged, handheld satellite phone that can be used in a variety of situations. It has a small monochrome screen measuring just 1.8 x 1.8 in and a rechargeable battery giving 10h of use with a 15-minute tracking interval. It uses the Iridium network that has global coverage.

Cost: £199.99
 Weight: 100g
 Dimensions: 48 x 30 x 20mm



Garmin InReach Explorer

This is very similar to a handheld GPS with a colored screen and a directional pad. Land-based maps are available for the Explorer and all the user-friendly features are available to use with them (including, computer etc.). With its Bluetooth connectivity, it can link to a smartphone to make sending and receiving text and emails easier than using the directional pad to send up and down and enter. Like the Mini, it communicates with a Garmin watch and enables you to download the built-in app onto your phone to see exactly where you are on land.

It measures 48 x 30 x 20mm and weighs 100g. The battery is rechargeable and will last 10h at 15-minute tracking intervals. The screen size is 1.8 x 1.8 in, being rather small. It will work all over the world.

"It measures 48 x 30 x 20mm and weighs 100g. The battery is rechargeable and will last 10h at 15-minute tracking intervals."

Cost: £199.99
 Weight: 100g
 Dimensions: 48 x 30 x 20mm

OFFSHORE POWERBOATING



SPOT X

The tracker is unique in that it is the only one that has a backlit keyboard and full screen. It looks like a slightly larger Blackberry phone. The keyboard is a bit small and fiddly to use, but it is still functional to all users. The unit itself measures for a 78 x 60 mm and weighs 110g. You can send outgoing texts but messages and the best package includes 30 per month, and after that each message costs 20c. You also get unlimited check-in messages, predefined messages (so you don't have to store) and tracking for 10, 30 or 60-minute intervals. Messages to other SPOT users are free of charge.

The screen is monochrome and at times the writing is a little small, however, the screen can be switched to white writing on a black background, which makes it easier to read. Expansion of text is done with a directional pad and is straightforward. It has rechargeable batteries through its USB port that last for up to 10 days in standby tracking mode and come through the Gelioner satellite.

Visit us on www.gelioner.com or contact us on 01203 251111. Email: sales@gelioner.com



Yellow Brick

The YB1 is the only unit that is totally waterproof. The water it is rugged, measures 146 x 75 x 26 mm (plus antenna) and weighs 110 g. The battery is rechargeable and has a life of three weeks with tracking, and is every 10 minutes. It has a measurement of a 30 mm square screen with a directional pad. The pad can be used to scroll around the menu and to input text messages. Email, MMS, it also has Bluetooth connectivity.

with emergency, making sending text messages and emails much easier. It does not connect to GPRS in an emergency. Instead it has an alert button that you programme. It also has some other types of alert but function other devices. There is the 'blast door's alert' alert where you set the time for a subject time and you need to press a button before starting that, and it then notifies the coast. If you don't press a button up alert sounds to remind you, and if you still don't press a button an alert message is sent. There are other alerts for temperature, travelling out of a defined area and even a collision alert.

"The battery is rechargeable and has a life of three weeks with tracking, and is every 10 minutes."

The YB1 works through the mobile network and has a unique way of charging. You pay a monthly fee (10.00) for the rental and for credits. The cost of credits goes down from 10c if you use 1000.

Credits are used each time you transmit and credit is used for tracking position or for 10 characters of a message sent or received, plus one credit for an SMS delivery. If you check your mailbox and there are no messages waiting, this costs one credit. Credits only expire if you do not use your account for 12 months.

Visit us on www.gelioner.com or contact us on 01203 251111.



Our dealers go to Gelioner.com for their course and help with all our sales, the link for their name. Global Forest Communications (www.gelioner.com) for their advice and information on some of the various trackers and phones. 020

A MARINE PARTS SELECTION THAT'S SECOND TO NONE

Quality products backed by an industry-leading warranty.

ENGINE & DRIVE PARTS
INSTRUMENTATION
SWITCHES
ENGINE DIAGNOSTICS
SHIELDS HOSE
OILS & LUBRICANTS
TOOLS & ACCESSORIES

THE VERY BEST PARTS OF BOATING
www.marineparts.com

STINGER

Bespoke built RIBs in Southampton

www.mrl-uk.com
 T: 02380 375333 E: sales@mrl-uk.com

OUR 2018 DEMONSTRATORS ARE IN STOCK & AVAILABLE
 Call for details

History rollbacks are offered on a full range of products

STINGER MRL

See us on: 2018 • Southampton City Road • Steady State • 140 Millbank Street • Southampton • SO14 5JH

