

Position forwarding



It is good when colleagues, friends, the family and other interested people can trace my expedition tours. Today, that does not pose any big technical problems anymore. In the age of GSM and satellites the actual position can be transmitted periodically.

But be aware, GSM is not available everywhere (in Russia for example, only the bigger cities and the west/east highway have GSM reception). Some hundred meters/yards can make a big difference. Also, transmission by GSM is not very cheap (eg very high roaming charges in Russia).

But it is specially important to have connection to the outside world in remote places where nobody will help you in case of emergency. Here, satellites come into play. (Thuraya, Iridium, Explorer etc). The devices are not quite cheap and most of the time, you have to subscribe to the services with monthly bills (or a prepaid subscription that is void after a certain time) - whether you need the service or not. Nevertheless, I don't want to abstain from satellite transmission. It is possible to rent many hand-helds. This is an advantage if you want to use them only occasionally.



I decided for an Inmarsat (Inter Maritime Satellite) Standard Terminal C. It is manufactured by the Danish producer Thrane & Thrane (<http://www.thrane.com/>). Although no audio conversation is possible (only e-mail) other advantages led me to my choice. I am able to send 'prioritized' position transmission that arrive at the receiver already after some minutes in case of emergency. No periodic subscription is necessary to the service. However, you pay somewhat more per transmission. In any case, it is important to have an advisor that is specialised on these terminals and guarantees you a good after-sale service ; even if you have to pay somewhat more.



As important as the exact position is an effective support organisation in case of emergency. What does it help your wife at home when she receives an alarm and does not have any instructions how to act upon? It can be the garagist that may help or your ham radio colleague that can organise local help or in the worst case you can contact the government, eg EDA (info@eda.admin.ch).

