

X-Mozilla-Status: 0001
X-Mozilla-Status2: 00800000
X-Mozilla-Keys:
Message-ID: <
Date: Wed, 08 Feb 2012 09:28:45 -0800
From: George
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10.6; rv:10.0) Gecko/
20120129 Thunderbird/10.0
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: editorial@eaa.org
Subject: Fwd: Is this suitable for COPA publication with a few edits?
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Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
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I notice that the United States is advancing with their proposal to implement Air Traffic Control using GPS technology. Where they go the rest of us follow.

Currently most of us use a system of expensive Transponders and Flight Plan filing backed up by 406 MHz ELT's and SPOT beacons. With the new system it is possible, in fact likely, that most of this will be replaced. Envision a system where one device on board the aircraft transmits a signal (just like Spider-Trax or SPOT does now), that is monitored by a central computer system. In defined populated or especially active areas, or when flight plans activate it, the data is automatically forwarded to the appropriate personnel monitored conventional screens for human monitoring.

In this new system should a crash activated signal be received, or distress button pressed, or if you stray into the wrong space, or too close to another aircraft, or meet any number of pre-determined profiles, action is initiated.

God? Bad? Doesn't really matter since it meets the requirements of HomeLand Security, or the FAA, or TC, DND, or any other agency involved. And, really, at least from the safety perspective I don't think all of us object.

What does worry me is that if the bureaucracy behaves in their typical fashion, another piece of electronic equipment will be created and if it follows the pattern of the last 100 years, I expect it will cost me \$2000.00 to buy, and \$150.00 per year to license. There will be "re-certification" costs of \$1000.00 every 2 years. There will be registration fees and data management. But all this doesn't need to be. What if, when this system is implemented by the regulators, they recognize that existing private sector technology could be contracted for \$150.00 per year (like SPOT) to provide the exact service required. The current cost for these interactive transmitters is less than \$200. Just imagine the cost reductions if they could benefit from more

production?

Lots could go wrong between now and the time I remove my 406 (which incidentally the US did NOT legislate for their aircraft because of "...new technology on the horizon..."). This was likely the source of that explanation.

I see where some large company in the United States is before FCC proposing to create a National satellite wifi system, arguing that "filters can be cheaply be purchased for existing GPS receivers to prevent interference." We all know that isn't going to happen...GPS technology is too deeply ingrained in American society (ask any Farmer in North America if he still drives his combine?). What is almost certain is that some company in the know is positioning themselves to get compensation from the Government. Regardless, it adds credibility to a large scale planned change in the use of GPS.

If it can be done as easily as is possible count me in. In any event some form of radio transmitter will still be required for the CASARA to find my aircraft once alerted. If you ask around you discover 406 is NOT it! They still must home on 121.5, and my new 406 ELT only transmit a tiny percentage of that signal compared to what is needed. So, without re-opening the 406 issue, I am still storing my old 121.5 ELT, because when my new government approved SPOT replaces my 406 I will need to put it back.

Sincerely

The Last Flying Taxpayer.

George Balmer