

Enhanced Special Reporting Service (eSRS)

Satellite Assisted Flight Plan Tracking



Using technology to expedite Search and Rescue (SAR) in Alaska

Concept - Aircraft equipped with certain models of satellite/GPS tracking devices may include them as an augmentation of their normal VFR or IFR Flight Plan.

Satellite communication devices are now available that provide tracking or emergency alert features for pilots. The FAA Alaska Flight Service has developed a program that allows pilots to augment and enhance the benefits of the standard VFR or IFR Flight Plan. We are starting from the basic premise of “Special Reporting Service”, an established program to track pilots operating in mountains or over water by maintaining frequent contact on the radio. That idea is to launch SAR at the earliest possible moment when it is believed that an aircraft is in distress. Rapid responses save lives! This program allows Flight Service to receive an alert from an aircraft in distress via lightweight electronics carried in the aircraft and transmitted via satellite. Flight Service does not actively track the flights, but once an alert is generated, the position of the aircraft is transmitted to Flight Service. This document is a description of the program, the devices used and information for pilots interested in using this service.

Benefits Include:

- Alert notifications are transmitted to FSS directly, reducing the response time in the event of an emergency.
- Alert messages typically include the location of the aircraft in distress, allowing rescue to go directly to the aircraft location, instead of searching along an entire route when a flight becomes overdue.
- The service offers increased protection when a pilot files a round-robin or extended duration flight plan for travel to remote areas without access to VHF radio communication outlets.

Who May Participate? Pilots and aircraft owners who have DeLorme/Garmin inReach™, SPOT™, Spidertracks™ or TracPlus™/RockAIR™ devices may participate in this program on VFR or IFR flights within the state of Alaska. The alerting features of these devices, **combined with a flight plan**, may provide benefits when operating in Alaska.

How Does it Work? Pilots looking for more information or wishing to participate in eSRS should contact one of the FSS personnel listed on the front of this brochure. A **Master Flight Plan** will need to be established, or updated, with Flight Service prior to participation. Your information must include the make and model of the device that you will use, and check off “**eSRS Participant**” on the Master Flight Plan form.

Do I Need to File a Flight Plan? Pilots should always file a flight plan. If an Alert or distress message is transmitted, it will be received directly by Flight Service. Once matched to your flight plan, the response by rescue authorities will be expedited by the location information included in the message.

It is important to understand that this service is in addition to, and supplements, a regular flight plan.

Create or Update your Master Flight Plan!

Master Flight Plans may be submitted to any Flight Service Station.

When our database has been updated, you will receive notification that your Master Flight Plan is ready to use. From then on, you may inform the briefer that you have a Master Flight Plan and only supply the elements needed for your current flight. The process of filing a flight plan has never been simpler!



What You Need To Get Started

There are now several models of GPS satellite tracking devices approved for the eSRS Program including DeLorme/Garmin inReach™, SPOT™, Spidertracks™ and TracPlus™/RockAIR™. After choosing and purchasing a device, you must then establish or modify your Master Flight Plan with Alaskan Flight Services, and check the **eSRS Participant** box on the form. When we process the Master Flight Plan you will receive, via email, links to device-specific instructions for setting up your tracker.

All messages to Alaskan Flight Services should include your N-Number and name. This type of message will generate a communications search based on your active flight plan. If communications cannot be established, a full SAR response may occur.

Once you have entered the Flight Service contact information, Flight Service will be notified when your tracker's emergency mode is activated. The rest is up to us!

If you have additional questions about the contact information, contact a Flight Service Station. Please note that Flight Service is not able to provide technical support for the devices used. Contact the equipment's manufacturer for details regarding their operation.

What Happens Next?

When you've modified your Master Flight Plan, and have been notified that we have added your aircraft to the state-wide database, it's time to set up your tracker. From then on you are in the program! File a flight plan every time you go flying, and enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing that Search and Rescue will be expedited if the unexpected happens.

Restrictions:

This program is intended for VFR and IFR flights within Alaska. Search and Rescue procedures for trans-border flights to Canada or Russia are not currently adapted for eSRS.

Emergency messages not associated with an aircraft will be forwarded to the Rescue Coordination Center for action.

Contact Information:

Fairbanks FSS:

Support Staff
(907) 455-1600

Juneau FSS:

Support Staff:
(907) 586-7377

Kenai FSS:

Support Staff:
(907) 283-3735

