

Special Regulations Interpretation

2017-2021 Special Regulations – Secondary GPS

Issued 11 December 2019

1. Question:

What is the intention and interpretation of Special Regulation 4.11 which requires under SR 4.11.2 for Categories 1 and 2 that there be a second GPS which is handheld and water resistant, and that a spare battery be provided?

2. Answer:

The intent of SR 4.11.2 is to ensure there is a secondary GPS device designed and manufactured for a marine environment with the purpose of determining latitude and longitude of the boat, and that can be used independent of the boat's main power supply in an emergency.

3. Issue:

Hand-held marine VHF radios with GPS capabilities are readily available on the market. Equipment Auditors have asked if a hand-held marine VHF radio with GPS can serve as meeting the requirements of SR 4.11.2.

If the GPS position can be read on screen and that the boat has a spare battery for the device, the hand-held marine VHF radio with GPS capability may comply with SR 4.11.2.

4. Background:

The secondary GPS is for use in emergency situations when the primary GPS receiver has failed. Australian Sailing accepts that the secondary device may not have the same level of capability as the primary GPS required in SR 4.11.1.

A hand-held marine VHF radio that shows the coordinates of the boat may be fit for the intended purpose. The coordinates of the boat can be used for plotting the boat's position on charts or other form of plotter, basic navigation planning or relaying the boat's position to other parties.

The spare battery allows the GPS to extend its operation with a degree of independence from the boat's power systems. The hand-held marine VHF radio with GPS may not be solely reliant on the boat's recharging facilities for that extended use.

Other GPS devices designed for the marine environment that display latitude and longitude and have a spare battery may also meet the requirements of SR 4.11.2.

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