



CASE STUDY

BREAKDOWN IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

FERNIE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION PROTECTS VOLUNTEERS WITH BLACKLINE SAFETY

The Fernie Snowmobile Association (FSA) maintains 160km of backcountry trails near Fernie, British Columbia, Canada. Working alone at night, and out of cell range, their volunteers rely on Blackline Safety to keep them connected to help if needed.



AT A GLANCE

THE CHALLENGE

Lone volunteers working out of cell range

To keep trails open during the day, FSA members spend their nights on a snowcat trail groomer, driving deep into the mountains. There, they can spend up to 10 hours grooming the trails, which are almost entirely without cell service.

At approximately 2:00AM one cold night in January, an FSA snow cat operator was grooming one of the heavily forested access trails when warning alarms began sounding on the vehicle. The operator stopped the vehicle immediately for fear of damaging the machine with further use.

Broken down in the backcountry, 25km from the staging area with temperatures well below freezing, the operator needed help.

- One cold night in winter, an FSA snowcat operator grooming snowmobile trails is in need of help when his vehicle breaks down in the backcountry.
- Pulling the SOS latch on his satellite-enabled G7x Lone Worker Safety Device, the operator is connected instantly to Blackline in-house Safety Operations Center (SOC). The agent reaches emergency contacts, shares his GPS location, and relays information throughout the process.
- Knowing the exact location of the breakdown, the emergency contacts quickly dispatch a mechanic, who travels by snowmobile to repair the snowcat and get the operator to safety.

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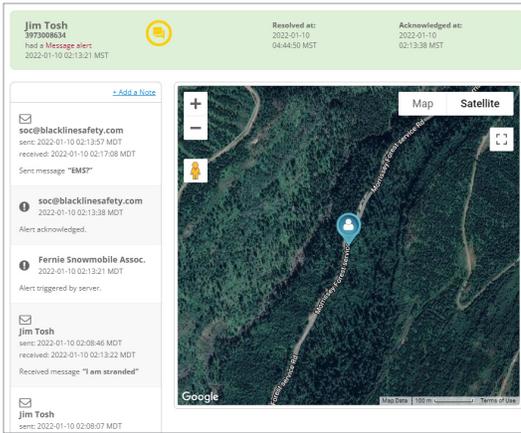
KM OF GROOMING/YEAR

29

FEET OF SNOWFALL ANNUALLY

3

G7X LONE WORKER SAFETY DEVICE + G7 PORTABLE BRIDGE



“Lone worker safety is a top priority for the FSA staff and volunteers. Partnering with Blackline Safety gives our organization the confidence to work safely in remote areas, stay in touch and communicate when required.”

**David Hozjan, Vice President –
Fernie Snowmobile Association**

THE BLACKLINE SOLUTION

Satellite connectivity and live monitoring saves the day

Fortunately, the snowcat operator was wearing Blackline Safety’s G7x Lone Worker Monitor, which offers satellite connectivity via a G7 Bridge portable satellite base station placed inside the vehicle.

By pulling the SOS latch on his satellite-linked G7x device, the volunteer was immediately connected to Blackline’s in-house Safety Operations Center (SOC). Seconds later, a Blackline Safety agent received a message alert from the G7x device, reading, “Send help. I am broken down. Need mechanic.”

After ensuring EMS wasn’t required, the agent assured the volunteer help was on the way and contacted the emergency numbers provided by the FSA.

THE RESULTS

Pinpointing location ensures aid arrives quickly

The Blackline Safety SOC agent got in touch with FSA emergency contact David Hozjan, Vice President of the FSA Board, letting him know the snowcat operator needed help.

While Hozjan tried to reach a mechanic, the Blackline Safety agent reassured the operator by messaging him, “David has been contacted.”

“Understood,” Came the reply from the G7x monitor moments later. Now, there was nothing to do but wait in the relative warmth of the cab for help to arrive.

With the information provided by the Blackline Safety agent from the G7x device, Hozjan could pinpoint the location of the breakdown for the mechanic. This allowed the mechanic to estimate his travel time, and, if the operator had been in medical distress, it would have enabled EMS to reach him much faster than without this information.

Traveling by snowmobile, the mechanic located the operator and resolved the issue flagged by the dashboard warning lights. With the snowcat purring once again, the operator was able to drive the machine back to the staging area without incident.