GPS Device Sends Location Data and Alert Message to Emergency Responders

January 7, 2008 – SPOT Rescue Alert (SRA) When Natalie Bertsch bought her husband a GPS-enabled SPOT™ Satellite Messenger for Christmas, little did she know that only a week later he would use SPOT while coming to the aid of four friends swept away in an avalanche near Laramie, Wyoming. On Jan. 2, 2008, Brian Bertsch contacted an emergency 9-1-1 call center by pressing a single button on his handheld SPOT.

A group of snowmobilers were riding when they heard an avalanche nearby in the area where four of their friends were riding in the Snowy Mountain Range. Upon arriving on the scene, Bertsch sent his GPS location and distress message by pressing a single 9-1-1 button, and immediately started helping to dig his friends out of the snow. They were able to free three before rescuers arrived. One man, reportedly in his forties, was also buried but did not survive the accident.

“I received an OK message from Brian’s SPOT telling me that he was safe. In fact, I was viewing his location through Google Maps online at findmespot.com when I was called by the Emergency Response Center used by SPOT. They contacted me instantly and notified the local area emergency responders within minutes,” said Natalie Bertsch. “SPOT’s quick response was critical in the rescue communication. I can rest easily knowing that Brian will have SPOT with him every time he snowmobiles because of the safety capabilities and peace of mind it gives me.”