Re: Vampire phone problem! how to bypass internal battery

Source: http://sci.tech−archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.misc/2006−05/msg00230.html

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- *Date*: Mon, 29 May 2006 00:45:30 +0100

Kaos wrote:

> Hello,
>
> Introduction
> **********
>
> Please can someone help me with a problem I've got. I have recently
> bought two GPS enabled GSM mobile phones with the view of installing them
> in each of my cars as a cheap tracker.
>
> The basics all worked out, a 50 pence pay as you go sim card from Orange,
> hard wire a 12V phone charger into the cars electrics and hide the phones
> behind the trim.
>
> They work a treat, they appear to get decent GPS reception and when a
> query is sent via SMS they respond with the location, speed and direction
> of
> travel of the car − together with the battery charge level. However,
> there is a problem!
>
> The phones (Benefone Track One's) appear to be very thirsty when the GPS
> function is switched on. Of the three GPS settings, the highest (FULL)
> only
> gives the phones about a 8hr standby − which is useless. The next power
> setting down (LOW) extends the standby to about 30 hrs, and the final
> option is off − whereby I get about 5 days standby, but with the GPS
> functions disabled.
>
> The good news is that these settings can be sent remotely via SMS, and you
> can get the phone to switch between Low and Full mode automatically when
> external power is presented (for example on ignition of the car). If the
> phones go completely flat, they automatically switch on when external
> power
> is presented as well. (thanks for bearing with me so far!).

Problem
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The phone charger flattens the car battery if left on constant power. On my BMW (80amp 12V battery) it only takes about three days if the car isn't driven for the battery to get low enough not to start the car. If I put the charger on the ignition wire, its obviously fine − but the tracking is only possible if the engine is on since the car chargers don't seem to ever fully charge the phones I get nothing like five days standby power.

In a nutshell can anyone think of a solution. I know a little bit, and have tried the following:

1 − measure the current drain of the power going into the 12v charger... Not entirely sure I got this properly, but it looks like about 200mA's

2 − buy a "battery saver" from Maplins, this plugs into the power and lets accessories use the car power until the voltage drops to 11.8V and then it cuts the power... Nice in theory, but it only delays the problem. If I went on holiday for two weeks, the phone charger