Maritime Satellite News Brief

Contents

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,
Here is our latest compendium of news from Iridium for the maritime marketplace. I hope you will find these news items timely and newsworthy for your readers. If you would like to follow up on any of these stories, please contact me, Liz DeCastro (liz.decastro@iridium.com) or Jina Gaines (jgaines@rhodescomm.com), and we'll be happy to set up an interview, send additional information or supply press-quality photos.

These are exciting times for Iridium's maritime satellite business. Our Iridium OpenPortTM high-bandwidth service, having gone through beta testing on a variety of different ship platforms, has moved into full-scale commercialization. We are now making deliveries to Service Partners to meet the backlog of orders in the pipeline. We are also working with our partners to roll out vessel tracking and reporting solutions to meet the international regulatory requirements for ocean-going ships and commercial fishing vessels . Our new 9555 handset, introduced late last year, is turning a lot of heads, including in the recreational boating sector. Buoyed by strong end-of-year financial results , we are continuing to work on the planned combination with GHL Acquisition Corp. (AMEX: GHQ), and we are on schedule for the development of our Iridium NEXT replacement constellation.

Sincerely,
Liz DeCastro
Director, Corporate Communications
Iridium

Back to Contents

Iridium OpenPortTM Plays Key Communications Role for Argentine Navy Ship in Antarctic Deployment

One of the Iridium OpenPortTM beta test platforms was the Argentine navy vessel, ARA Suboficial Castillo, a 205-foot ocean-going fleet tug. Tesacom, an Iridium Service Partner in South America, organized the beta test. The ship deployed from Ushuaia harbor in late November to conduct a variety of missions in support of the Antarctic community during the Austral summer. The ship's itinerary extended as far south as the Brown Antarctic Base at 64 degrees 35.5 minutes south latitude - areas in which geostationary satellite coverage is unreliable due to the low elevation angles above the horizon. The deployment also unexpectedly included operations to support the rescue of passengers and crew from a cruise ship that ran aground near Cape Anna on the Antarctic Peninsula.

The ship's commanding officer, Rodrigo Martin Arriegues, reported that the Iridium OpenPort unit performed well throughout the deployment, more than exceeding expectations.

"When compared to other communication options, Iridium OpenPort gives us much more data speed, a reliable communication system and a much more complete solution," he said.

Arriegues said that, prior to Iridium, the ship's crew were forced to rely on high-frequency radio for telephone calls, using a phone patch to the Public Switched Telephone Network through a naval radio station in Ushuaia. He believes Iridium OpenPort made a tremendous impact on crew morale on the ship, making it possible for the first time for crew members to call and e-mail loved ones at home, surf the Internet and participate in online social media.

"This service played a critical role in maintaining crew morale," he said. "The crew enjoyed the ability to communicate more easily with their families during the long voyage away from home."

communicate more easily with their families during the long voyage away from home.

Arriegues said another exciting new application for the crew was the ability to interface with social networks such as Facebook®, through which they were able to share the "Antarctic experience" with their families and friends. "We created an Antarctica social network with the bases at Jubany and Esperanza, where we share a lot of information," he said.

Back to Contents

Iridium-Based Vessel Monitoring Systems are Approved for Commercial Fisheries

Automatic vessel monitoring for regulated fisheries is an important growth market for Iridium. Several Service Partners have developed Iridium-based Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMSs) that permit shore authorities to track the location and activity of fishing vessels in protected fisheries. Iridium's global satellite coverage, including the important fishing grounds in the Arctic and Antarctic regions, and robust short-burst data (SBD) links provide an efficient, effective means for fishing fleets to meet current and future regulations for fisheries worldwide.

The Faria WatchDog® VMS (www.fariawatchdog.net) recently received type approval from the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) for its 16 member countries, the National Fishery Authority Papua New Guinea and the Australian and New Zealand Fishery Agencies, as well as the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries. Faria WatchDog is also type approved by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for all U.S. fishery regions. The Faria WatchDog VMS is a dual-mode transceiver product that uses the Iridium satellite network for position reporting and GSM data links when working in range of shore towers. The unit provides text messaging, mandated VMS position reporting and activity code declarations, catch and notification forms, and e-mail as well as automatic transmission of required VMS data information to fishery authorities.

Zunibal S.A. (www.zunibal.com) has introduced an Iridium-enabled VMS product that meets the latest revised regulations recently published by the Spanish government for commercial fishing vessel tracking. The new Zunibal ZVMS77 shipboard VMS transponder uses Iridium's 9601 SBD modem to transmit the vessel's GPS position coordinates, speed, heading and status information at automatic intervals or in response to a polling request from the Spanish fishing authorities. The shipboard device meets all of the technical specifications established for compliant equipment. Zunibal is a leader in applying satellite technology for the specialized needs of the tuna-fishing industry worldwide.

Collecte Localisation Satellite (CLS) (www.cls-halios.net) has developed an advanced VMS product that provides vessel tracking in compliance with international regulations and also meets emerging standards for electronic reporting systems (ERSs). The European Union (EU) will require approved ERS devices on commercial fishing vessels larger than 24 meters by Jan. 1, 2010, and vessels over 15 meters by Jan. 1, 2012. The ERS will replace the current manual record keeping with an electronic logbook, which is used to transmit catch, landing, sales and transshipment data to fishing authorities. The CLS Halios system provides both VMS and ERS functions in a single device. It is based on CLS' Thorium satellite data terminal, which uses the Iridium network to transmit and receive data.

Back to Contents

Iridium Partners Roll Out Approved LRIT Solutions

Iridium's Service Providers are quickly moving ahead to develop and bring to market Iridium-based Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) solutions to meet the new international carriage requirements, which came into effect Jan. 1, 2009.

"Iridium's unique value proposition of global coverage, low-latency data links and high network quality provides an ideal solution for shipowners to satisfy the regulatory requirement," said Don Thoma, executive vice president, Marketing, Iridium Satellite. "Iridium is the only approved solution for LRIT in Sea Area A4. That means any ships sailing on high-latitude Polar routes must be fitted with an approved Iridium LRIT device to be in compliance with the regulations."

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has awarded Collecte Localisation Satellite (CLS) (www.cls-halios.net) a contract to provide and operate the European Union (EU) LRIT Data Centre, as well as the associated Application Service Provider (ASP) and Communication Service Provider (CSP) functions. The EMSA LRIT Data Centre will serve the 27 EU maritime administrations, as well as those of Iceland and Norway, and will also request reports from non-EU flag vessels entering EU coastal waters.

The LRIT terminal is based on the CLS Thorium vessel tracking and monitoring system. CLS and Faria WatchDog®, Inc. are two of the first Iridium Value-Added Manufacturers (VAMs) to complete compliance

and test requirements for operating LRIT equipment on the Iridium network. So far, CLS has delivered, installed and tested over 100 Iridium-based Thorium tracking devices.

EMA's BlueTraker® will be installed on three Canadian icebreakers in the coming weeks and tested in Sea Area A4 this coming Arctic season.

Faria WatchDog, Inc., an Iridium VAM and Value-Added Reseller, has announced that its WatchDog 750 LRIT ship terminal has successfully completed the compliance and test requirements for operation on the Iridium satellite network. The WatchDog 750 LRIT unit fully complies with International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolution MSC.210(81), which spells out performance standards and technical specifications for LRIT ship terminals.

"The WatchDog 750 LRIT terminal is built on our proven Iridium-based Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) technology, which is in use on thousands of commercial fishing vessels around the world to meet regulatory requirements for tracking and monitoring," said Mark O'Brien, vice president and general manager of Faria WatchDog, Inc. "The Faria WatchDog 750 LRIT system provides the same performance and reliability found in our WatchDog VMS systems, which are transferring millions of fishing vessel position reports, e-forms and messages monthly over the Iridium satellite network."

Iridium is actively working with other VAMs to certify their LRIT devices for operation on the Iridium network.

Back to Contents

Visit HTML Link

To read the online enhanced version, please visit this link.

Back to Contents

Download PDF Version

To download a PDF version to your desktop, please click here.

Back to Contents
