



Iridium OpenPort(R) Provides Reliable High-Bandwidth Voice and Data Communications for Around the Americas Expedition

MCLEAN, Va., May 20, 2010 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- As the sailboat *Ocean Watch* heads into the homestretch of the Around the Americas expedition, the captain reports that the vessel's Iridium OpenPort® satellite terminal has provided reliable, high-quality voice and data links throughout the voyage.

Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq:IRDM), and its service partner Stratos, provided the Iridium OpenPort system for the 64-foot steel-hull vessel's 13-month circumnavigation of the North and South American continents, which departed from Seattle, Wash. on May 31, 2009. The mission of the expedition is to call attention to the health of the world's oceans and the impact of global climate change on local environments and ecosystems.

"So far, we have covered more than 25,000 nautical miles, including a west-east transit of the Northwest Passage and an east-west rounding of Cape Horn," said expedition leader, Mark Schrader, in an e-mail posted from the Iridium OpenPort terminal at sea. "We have enjoyed regular daily Iridium communication via phone and e-mail. The connections were clear and strong at both ends of the Earth – coverage that you cannot find through any other maritime communications system."

"Along with our daily communications to friends, families, schools and research institutions, we regularly receive large data files, PDFs of magazine articles and layouts for articles we've written for many different magazines," Schrader said. "The Iridium/Stratos package has been the best and most reliable method for keeping in touch, and has made it possible for us to promote – in real time – the educational and scientific mission of the Around the Americas voyage."

"Since we are filing a daily story along with images for uploads to our Website, we now have sent more than 1,500 images, with some photo packages approaching the 4 MB size, via Iridium with no significant problems," said Schrader.

"I doubt anyone attempting a transit of the Northwest Passage in a sailboat has written a book about it at the same time," Schrader continued. "Thanks to Iridium, we did just that. We transmitted a 60-page book, including text and images – many of them very large files – to our designer/publisher through Iridium from the very remote village of Pond Inlet in the Canadian Arctic."

Self published, designed by Tom Wallace and printed by IGI Publishing, the book was completed in time for the vessel's first East Coast U.S. port of call in Boston, Mass.

"The Around the Americas expedition has been an ideal platform to showcase the strength of the Iridium OpenPort equipment as well as the high-quality voice and data connections through the Iridium satellite network," said Greg Ewert, executive vice president, global distribution channels, Iridium. "We have delivered and activated more than 1,500 Iridium OpenPort terminals on a wide variety of vessel types, ranging from sailboats to large commercial ships."

"Iridium's satellite network provided excellent coverage over the entire route for the Around the Americas voyage, including the extreme northern and southern latitudes," said Ronald Spithout, senior vice president, sales and marketing, Stratos. "Iridium, with its low-earth orbit constellation of cross-linked satellites, is the only maritime satellite service capable of reaching these Polar Regions, which is critical for organizations such as the Around the Americas team that need a reliable, critical communications lifeline."

The vessel is currently sailing northward up the U.S. West Coast, with a planned return to its original homeport in Seattle, Wash. on June 17.

About Iridium Communications Inc.

Iridium Communications Inc. (www.iridium.com) is the only mobile satellite service (MSS) company offering coverage over the entire globe. The Iridium constellation of low-earth orbiting (LEO) cross-linked satellites provides critical voice and data services for areas not served by terrestrial communication networks. Iridium serves commercial markets through a worldwide network of distributors, and provides services to the U.S. Department of Defense and other U.S. and international government agencies. The company's customers represent a broad spectrum of industry, including maritime, aeronautical, government/defense, public safety, utilities, oil/gas, mining, forestry, heavy equipment and transportation. Iridium has launched a major development program for its next-generation satellite constellation, Iridium NEXT. The company is headquartered in McLean, Va., USA and trades on the Nasdaq Global Market under the ticker symbols IRDM (common stock), IRDMW (\$7.00 warrants), IRDMZ (\$11.50 warrants) and IRDMU (units).

About Stratos

Stratos is the world's trusted leader for vital communications. Stratos offers the most powerful and extensive portfolio of remote communications solutions including mobile and fixed satellite and microwave services. More than 20,000 customers use Stratos products and industry-leading Value-Added services to optimize communications performance. Stratos serves U.S. and international government, military, first responder, NGO, oil/gas, industrial, maritime, aeronautical, enterprise and media users on seven continents and across the world's oceans. For more information, visit www.stratosglobal.com.

About Around the Americas

Around the Americas is an historic 28,000-mile clockwise-circumnavigation of the North and South American continents, never before undertaken in continuous fashion. The sailboat, equipped with some of the latest technology, along with scientists and educators who join during various legs of the voyage, is making 50 stopovers in 13 months to draw attention to the changing condition of the oceans. With major funding support from The Tiffany & Co. Foundation, the Rockefeller Family, and Unilever, a non-profit consortium has been formed to make the public more aware of the plight of our oceans. The project was developed by Sailors for the Sea, a non-profit organization that educates and empowers the boating community to protect and restore our oceans and coastal waters, in partnership with Pacific Science Center, a nationally recognized leader in informal science and environmental education. The crew includes Captain Mark Schrader, a world-record-holding, solo circumnavigator and ocean race director, and three talented, experienced, professional sailors, who are devoted to ocean conservation. Daily updates of the voyage are posted from the boat and are available at www.aroundtheamericas.org.

Forward-Looking Statements

Statements in this press release that are not purely historical facts may constitute forward-looking statements as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements include statements regarding Iridium NEXT. Other forward-looking statements can be identified by the words "anticipates," "may," "can," "believes," "expects," "projects," "intends," "likely," "will," "to be" and other expressions that are predictions or indicate future events, trends or prospects. These forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of Iridium to differ materially from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, uncertainties regarding the development and availability of financing for Iridium NEXT and other risks that affect our ability to generate cash internally, as well as general industry and economic conditions, and competitive, legal, governmental and technological factors. Other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements include those factors listed under the caption "Risk Factors" in the company's Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, filed

with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 16, 2010. There is no assurance that Iridium's expectations will be realized. If one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or if Iridium's underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those expected, estimated or projected. Iridium's forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this press release and Iridium undertakes no obligation to update forward-looking statements.

CONTACT: Iridium Communications Inc.

Marie Knowles
+1 (703) 287-7476
marie.knowles@iridium.com

Rhodes Communications, Inc.
Jim Rhodes
+1 (757) 451-0602
jrhodes@rhodescomm.com

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