

BlueTraker proves best choice for the UK fisheries' VMS and ERS systems

UK / Slovenia – February, 2013– Following the previous UK tender success, AST-EMA consortium supplied equipment for the new Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Electronic Reporting System (ERS) for UK Fisheries, based on the **BlueTraker**[®] VMS, to be tested by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and UKFA.

Extensive testing was conducted by the UKFA during the second half of 2012, which included all system functionalities, particularly the advanced embedded geo fences and their remote management. Tests were not limited to a controlled laboratory environment but were also performed at sea on vessels undertaking their regular fishing activities.

Following the successful completion of Acceptance Tests, the AST-EMA consortium was officially awarded Type Approval in January 2013. Official Type approval confirms **BlueTraker**[®] VMS to be the best choice for the UK fisheries' new VMS and ERS Systems. The installations of the first 330 above deck satellite terminals will follow in the first quarter of 2013.

The **BlueTraker**[®] VMS is the latest and most reliable generation of marine grade satellite terminals especially developed for the monitoring of fishing vessels in European waters. In addition to standard and secure positional data outputs and bidirectional communication, the **BlueTraker**[®] VMS terminal incorporates several new and unique features.

The terminal has an integrated design in which all electronic circuitry, antennas, GPS receiver, GPRS and satellite communication channels as well as back-up rechargeable batteries are housed in one compact unit above the vessel's deck. All EU reporting data is transmitted via an Iridium satellite based communication service (SCS). The GPRS channel is primarily used for inshore reporting, which is formatted to conform to national and inshore requirements.

An important feature of the **BlueTraker**[®] VMS terminal is the dynamic reporting. Up to 100 (one hundred) geographical areas (polygons and associated rules) in the form of geo fences can be remotely uploaded, edited, activated/deactivated etc. for each and every BlueTraker[®] terminal. Pre-defined National and EU control area co-ordinates (geo fences), are uploaded from the land based servers over the air. EU geo fence crossing and VMS positions are transmitted through the Iridium Satellite Communication Services (SCS), while National geo fence entering or exiting and associated VMS positions are transmitted either through SCS or GPRS communication channels - depending upon the rules set for each or every **BlueTraker**[®] VMS terminal.

Another outstanding feature of the **BlueTraker**[®] VMS terminal is the inclusion of a fail-safe Alert button. This facility enables crew members to send distress alerts directly from the terminal, even in the event of a power failure onboard the vessel.

Also included in the terminal is the ability to transmit UK Electronic Logbook Reports. Additional innovative functionality is incorporated in the satellite terminal by implementing CAN bus networking, allowing a virtually unlimited number of on-board fishing gears' hydraulic switches to be monitored from the Fisheries Monitoring Centre. This enables the authority to automatically and precisely assess the fishing activities for each and every vessel in the fleet...

About EMA

EMA, headquartered in Slovenia is an established company in the field of VMS and ERS systems for fisheries. The company develops, manufactures and markets a range of intelligent, remotely operable machine-to-machine terminals and systems.

EMA's solutions are applicable to a broad range of industries mainly using satellite communication technology to monitor remote locations or moving objects. In addition to several VMS installations, EMA has also provided other turn-key system solutions for maritime markets worldwide.

The company has participated in and won several VMS/ERS international tenders and has unified the VMS / ERS system equipment deployed in the Adriatic. The BlueTraker[®] solution is now used to monitor the national fishing fleets of Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, and Malta and most recently, Italy.

EMA is expanding its market share for innovative and reliable fisheries monitoring solutions throughout Western Europe, with the UK system and partially Norway as the latest additions.

For more information on EMA marine telematics activity visit: www.bluetraker.com.

About AST Marine Sciences Ltd

Applied Satellite Technology Ltd successfully won the tender to supply and maintain satellite based GPS tracking devices by DEFRA (including the UK Fisheries Departments in the UK, comprising England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man) on the UK's over 15 meter fishing fleet, equating to over 800 vessels in 2003.

AST Marine Sciences Ltd (AST MSL) was subsequently formed in 2008 to oversee the ongoing management of the VMS (Vessel Monitoring System) contract and other opportunities such as becoming the installation partner for the RNLI MOB Guardian system, now installed on 450+ vessels.

The **MOB Guardian's** ground breaking confidential reporting system enables Search and Rescue (SAR) agencies, including RNLI volunteer crewed lifeboats, to respond quickly to fishing vessels in distress, reducing critical response times and ultimately saving lives of fishermen.

AST Marine Sciences Ltd is part of the AST Group which was established in 1992 with a background in providing communications solutions to the offshore oil and gas exploration industry.

Recently celebrating its 20th year anniversary, the company has enjoyed tremendous growth in providing equipment to both the land and marine sectors including provision of satellite airtime.

AST currently operate on an international basis from three UK offices, with a further four offices based in South Africa, Singapore, Australia and the USA.

AST contribute their success and growth to their ability to offer customers a complete 'one stop' service combined with hard won specialized experience, a professional approach and a thorough understanding of customer needs.

For more information on AST Marine Sciences Ltd or the AST Group visit www.ast-msl.com, or www.theastgroup.com.

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. The company is headquartered in McLean, Va., U.S.A. and trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbols IRDM (common stock), IRDMW, IRDMZ, and IRDMU.

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