

NEWS RELEASE

Tait proud to support London firefighters with improved radio communications

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Cambridge, England – Tait Communications and its partner Radiocoms Systems Limited are proud to be selected by London Fire Brigade (LFB) to supply its firefighters with new fireground radio equipment which meets the Brigade’s requirements for improved range, clarity, safety, and long-term support.

London Fire Brigade is among the world’s largest fire and rescue services. It operates from more than 100 fire stations across the capital city’s 1600 square kilometres and has a staff of more than 5000 people. The Brigade’s programme to upgrade fireground communications is among changes it committed to following investigations into the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017.

The Tait Communications solution selected by London Fire Brigade equips firefighters with a powerful digital portable radio and a rugged speaker microphone. The equipment is intrinsically safe – meaning it is engineered and built to exceed safety standards for electrical equipment used in the kinds of potentially explosive atmospheres faced by firefighters.

Dave McGarry, Business Change Manager for LFB, says another defining requirement of the upgrade was to have radio communications which was engineered to perform well when used in combination with the Brigade’s current breathing apparatus (BA) and is fully compatible with new BA equipment from supplier MSA which the Brigade has recently selected for its upgrade.

“To improve the performance of the radio when used with BA, a higher-wattage radio was specified, and Tait produced a radio that provided this whilst retaining intrinsic safety,” Dave McGarry says. “To ensure the radios could be integrated with current and future BA equipment, a remote speaker microphone (RSM) was also specified for each firefighter’s radio – which will enhance BA communications across the fireground.

“An extensive evaluation of radios and RSM’s that met the LFB requirements was undertaken. They were taken to the Fire Service College at Moreton-in-Marsh to assess their performance when integrated with breathing apparatus in a number of representative environments,” Mr McGarry says. “The radios were used by firefighters at a variety of locations in London to replicate the complex-built environment in which the radios would be deployed.

“During the evaluation, Tait came up with minor modifications to improve the performance and usability of the radios, particularly when connected to the remote speaker microphone.

There was a positive reaction to the features and functionality that the Tait radios offered which resulted in these radios being the preferred choice of London's firefighters."

Dave Turner, Managing Director of Tait Communications in Europe, says the company, led by Tait Business Development Manager Richard Russell and the worldwide engineering team, has worked extremely hard to fully understand the wide range of situations firefighters can face during a job and to appreciate how challenging it can be for them to hear what is being said over their radios and to make fellow officers understand what they are saying.

"These environments make huge demands on fire personnel, with wildly fluctuating noise levels and the challenges wearing breathing apparatus can also affect firefighters' ability to communicate effectively," he says. "We learned that the job is made even more stressful when you are not sure if what you are reporting is being received or if you are hearing everything which the incident commander is saying.

"We have developed simulations to find sound-processing solutions to these challenges, set up to deliver optimum audibility across the range of situations firefighters may find themselves in," he says. "In recent years we have had terrific assistance from a number of fire and rescue services in Britain and their input gives us real confidence that we are helping to improve firefighter safety and coordination. Together with Radiocom Systems Limited we look forward to serving London Fire Brigade and London's public."

- **[Tait Communications](#) is a global critical communications-solutions business with its research and development and manufacturing base in Christchurch, New Zealand. Tait's determination to develop and deliver custom solutions which meet customers' needs has seen it achieve several contracts in recent years with fire and rescue services in the UK and Europe.**
- **Tait Communications' contact is Head of Communications Bryn Somerville -- bryn.somerville (at) taitcommunications.com and +6427 295 4299**
- **London-headquartered [Radiocom Systems Limited](#) is the UK's leading independent communications supplier specialising in the design, commissioning, deployment and maintenance of wireless voice, video and data networks.**
- **Radiocom's Managing Director Mark Blythe can be contacted at Mark.Blythe (at) radiocom.co.uk or call him on +44844 567 5670 | DDI: +447 971 185 177**