

# CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES



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## AIRWAVE AT THE OLYMPICS

Around 42,000 people<sup>1</sup> – police officers, security staff, volunteers and the military – will keep London safe during the Olympic Games. Airwave, the company behind the emergency services' communications network, will be making sure that they can all stay in contact by upgrading the main Network used by the police fire and ambulance services, and having built a brand new network (known as Apollo) which will be used by LOCOG staff and volunteers.

Both networks use Airwave's technology and expertise developed by delivering high quality communications for more than a decade:

- **Working together** – The main Network is used by all the emergency services, and 300 other organisations which help to keep the public safe. Because they communicate on the same system, they can work together during major events. The separate Apollo Network will be used by LOCOG staff in all Olympic venues.

- **Security** – Communications on the Airwave and Apollo Networks are encrypted, and cannot be scanned.

- **Reliability** – Public safety requirements mean that the Airwave Services must be exceptionally reliable. Designed to withstand major incidents, the

Service remains operational when other networks fail.

- **Clarity** – Digital networks mean that communications on the Airwave and Apollo Networks are crystal clear.

- **Coverage** – The main Network covers 99% of Great Britain, including the Highlands and islands. The Apollo Network covers every single Olympic venue, from sailing in Weymouth to football in Glasgow.

It is estimated that around 200,000 people will be working to ensure that events commence on time, athletes find their way to the venues and that the public have a safe and enjoyable experience. Co-ordinating such a large workforce over 34 competition venues across the country presents a monumental logistical challenge for LOCOG as well as the police, fire and ambulance services charged with keeping the public safe.

## CRITICAL RADIO

Both for the day-to-day co-ordination of the Games and planning for emergencies, effective, secure and clear



Airwave network supports police as they assist the general public

private mobile radio communication is going to be vital. It is here that Airwave is playing its part to help ensure that the London 2012 Games are safely delivered.

We deliver critical communications to organisations which provide vital public services. This includes the police, fire and ambulance services as well as local authorities, utilities and transport providers. In addition, the new network that will unite the tens of thousands of London 2012 staff and volunteers needed to guarantee that the Games progress smoothly, on time and with the flair that will see the London Games ranked as one of the best ever.

## APOLLO – COMMUNICATIONS WORTHY OF THE GAMES

LOCOG was quick to realise the importance of having effective, reliable and modern private digital communications in place for the Games. The 200,000 members of staff and volunteers working in events organisation and logistics, security, transport and technology support need to be able to communicate immediately and clearly.

LOCOG chose Airwave to provide its critical communication for the Games because of its expertise in designing, building and now operating the public safety network. As well as allowing the emergency services to communicate on a day-to-day basis, our service has also facilitated communications across large planned events, and unanticipated major incidents.

... keep London safe during the Olympic Games...

## ... Digital networks mean that communications are crystal clear...

To meet the radio communications requirements of the Games, Airwave used expertise built by helping the emergency services to communicate to design a reliable, secure and clear network. The Apollo network has been live since May 2011. During the Games it will include: 10,000 radio handsets, 2,000 vehicle-based radios and 350 desktop radios (primarily for use in control rooms). These all use the proven technology developed with the emergency services in mind.



Airwave supports the police mobile data requirement

Derek Graham, Senior Manager for Telecoms at LOCOG commented: "We were impressed with the ability of Airwave to prepare for and cope with large scale events that present similar communications challenges to those we anticipate during London 2012. We were also attracted by the fact they already worked with the emergency services, as we knew we would need to work closely with the police, fire and ambulance services throughout the event. Airwave seemed a natural choice to be our partner."

### UPGRADING THE AIRWAVE NETWORK

East London will benefit in particular, as new base stations have been built around the Olympic Park. This work has been carried out with assistance from the Olympic Security Directorate, the Metropolitan Police and the National Police Improvement Agency, to make sure that the technology meets



Airwave Emergency Response vehicle

the high standards required by the emergency services.

The Network will even cover the English Channel, as new base stations have been deployed to provide offshore coverage for emergency responders involved in any incidents surrounding the sailing events in Weymouth.

The project has come in on time and on budget and a number of the key milestones were met early. Deputy Chief Constable, Paul Minton, police lead for the Airwave service Olympic and Paralympic Games Project, said: "The solid working relationship between Airwave,

NPIA and forces demonstrates that there is a joint commitment to ensure that a secure and reliable communications network is delivered for the emergency services for the London 2012 Games. As a project, we are working hard to deliver a resilient service and are on target to meet the needs of the world's largest sporting event."

### TESTING TIMES

Apollo has already been used at the Olympic Test Events – the competitions held in Olympic

venues to make sure they are ready for the Games.

This gave us the chance to refine the service, and to practise procedures for training and equipping those who will use the radios.

This also gave LOCOG a chance to test the service. Gerry Pennell, Chief Information Officer for LOCOG said: "Now that we have a private mobile radio service using the Apollo network, our staff are using it in the run up and during test events. This will ensure they have sufficient time to understand the system and get the best out of the equipment and network".

Richard Bobbett, CEO of Airwave, said: "The value of our work with LOCOG lies in the association with the world's largest sporting event. We can already see the nation rallying behind the Games and the levels of excitement are growing to a fever pitch. This really is a once in a lifetime opportunity – one that is making everyone at Airwave incredibly excited."



Airwave network management centre operates 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, ensuring support and technical solutions to the over 300 users of the network.

<sup>1</sup> <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/sport/jmagnay1/100025082/london-2012-olympics-weather-wont-dampen-british-spirits-but-locog-could-learn-from-jubilee-success/>

### TRIAL RUN – THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Diamond Jubilee weekend was a chance to test Olympic security systems, as central London was even busier than it will be during the Games.

Three times the usual number of police officers were on duty in the capital, from forces as far afield as Fife and Mid Wales. In addition, organisations including the Army, the Port of London Authority and the RNLI kept the River Pageant safe and secure.

These organisations could co-ordinate their activity because they all use the Airwave Network.

## ... the world's largest sporting event ...