



Iridium Activates 1,000th High-Bandwidth Maritime Satellite Terminal

BETHESDA, Md., Dec. 7, 2009 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq:IRDM) announces the activation of the 1,000th Iridium OpenPort(R) marine satellite terminal aboard the Euronav tanker MV Fraternity.

Photos accompanying this release are available at:

<http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=6897>

<http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=6898>

Iridium's service provider AND Group plc installed and commissioned the Iridium OpenPort unit, which utilizes AND's IPSignature communication management software for voice and data calls.

Wouter Deknopper, Iridium's director for Europe, Middle East and Africa, presented a framed certificate to the shipowner on December 3 commemorating the event.

Fraternity is a new double-hull Belgium-flagged 159,000 deadweight ton tanker just delivered to Euronav from the Samsung Heavy Industries shipyard in South Korea. It is the 13th Euronav vessel to be fitted with Iridium OpenPort, and the company is currently installing the Iridium satcom terminals on 20 more ships.

"We are outfitting our tanker fleet with Iridium OpenPort to provide a cost-effective higher-bandwidth solution for our ship-to-shore communications," said Victor Kaidatzis, IT manager, Euronav. "We chose Iridium OpenPort because of its flexible, multi-line capabilities for voice and data, and its low capital acquisition and monthly usage costs, when compared to other maritime satellite systems. We are also impressed with AND's powerful IPSignature calling software, which helps us to manage our voice, e-mail and data traffic and communication costs more efficiently."

Euronav is dedicating two of the three voice channels for Iridium GoChat crew calling, with the third phone line on the bridge for ship's business, according to Ian Robinson, CEO of AND Group. The crew calling phones are located in telephone booths, permitting two off-duty crew members to talk privately with their families or friends at home simultaneously without queuing for a single public phone.

"In the past year, we have activated 1,000 Iridium OpenPort terminals," said Greg Ewert, executive vice president, global distribution channels, Iridium. "Since we completed sea trials of beta units and commenced full-scale delivery of production units in the first quarter, the product has received a positive response from early customers, many of whom have committed to install Iridium OpenPort on additional ships across the fleet."

"Iridium OpenPort offers an unbeatable value proposition of global coverage, three independent phone lines and separate data port scalable to 128 kbps, with a lightweight omni-directional antenna unit and cost-effective service plans for voice and data," Ewert added.

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 Bethesda, Md., U.S.A. 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 Euronav

Euronav (www.euronav.com) is one of the world's leading independent tanker companies engaged in the ocean transportation of crude oil and petroleum products. The company operates a modern fleet of ultra-large and very-large crude carriers and smaller Suezmax-size tankers. Euronav manages its fleet through three wholly owned subsidiaries: Euronav Ship Management (Hellas) Ltd., based in Piraeus, Greece, and Euronav Ship Management SA and Euronav SAS, both French companies with headquarters in Nantes and a major branch office in Antwerp.

About AND Group

Founded in 1974 in North Shields, Tyne and Wear, U.K., AND Group plc (www.and-group.net) is an internationally recognized provider of communication services to the marine and offshore sector. The company provides design, management, consulting and installation services across the mobile satellite service sector to a wide variety of clients operating in the marine and oil and gas industries. The company's recently launched IPSignature software platform is designed to optimize satellite communication and costs while providing a flexible administration-free access for crew.

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<p>Victor Kaidatzis (left), IT manager for Euronav, receives a certificate of appreciation in Antwerp, Belgium on December 3 from Ian Robinson, CEO, AND Group plc and Wouter Deknopper, director for Europe, Middle East and Africa, Iridium, in recognition of the 1000th Iridium OpenPort installation upon the MV Fraternity tanker ship.</p><p>An Iridium OpenPort high-speed maritime communications unit signifies the company's 1000th install through AND Group plc on the Euronav tanker ship, MV Fraternity.</p>

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