

A new Greater London digital network that's serious about waste.



When Steve Cairns, Managing Director of R F Lincs Ltd saw customers leaving the analogue PAMR system he had worked with for a number of years due to coverage and reliability issues he decided to build something better.

Armed with drive and ambition and the knowledge gained from operating PAMR systems in Liverpool, Greater Manchester and the East Midlands he began to research a new system for his London client base.

London is a notoriously difficult region to set up a PAMR network. The airways are congested, there is established competition, entry costs are high and OFCOM are selective with issuing licenses for the frequencies available.

Cairns worked on his business plan over two years and in 2013 was rewarded with a licence to operate a new 5 duplex channel network in London.

Next, he focussed on the design and specification for his subscription based network where he faced some major decisions which could dictate the long-term viability of his new network.

Analogue or Digital. Which is best?

The first, was whether to build an analogue MPT 1327 system or invest in higher performance, but more costly, digital technology.

To find out, he canvassed potential customers and the overwhelming feedback was that they wanted the assurance of a future-proofed, cost-effective and reliable two-way radio service which offered good, clear, uncongested voice communications throughout the area within the M25 and with this as his brief, the only real option was to build a digital network.

As he had a longstanding relationship with Airsys, one of Europe's leading radio communications distributors, he contacted them to discuss protocol and equipment options.

Following extensive evaluation, Cairns and the Airsys team selected the NEXEDGE® NXDN digital system from Kenwood as the ideal platform on which to build the network.

“..In terms of value, it offers a very attractive balance of performance to price in this application..”

Andrew Wilson, Sales Director of Airsys explains: “NEXEDGE® has been proven in countless mission critical applications around the world including one of the biggest digital PAMR networks in Europe. It's spectrum efficient and designed to offer flexibility in system configuration, control and scalability; and in terms of value, it offers a very attractive balance of performance to price in this application. I had no hesitation in agreeing to offer Steve some NEXEDGE® equipment for trials. Before we knew it, the system resilience was proven and the roll out was underway

Following a visit to the UK HQ of Kenwood Communications for a system demonstration, Stephen Edwards, Kenwood's Technical Manager agreed to programme the trial system which was set up as a digital conventional single channel trunked network operating in very narrow band 6.25 kHz mode to optimise channel capacity. Edwards comments: “Operating at 6.25 kHz gives an increase in range over a 12.5 kHz, so it was not only a case of spectrum efficiency and coverage that drove our technical solution, but one of cost effectiveness too”.

The trial system was installed and tested over three months and Cairns was delighted with the results: “I was frankly staggered by the coverage I could achieve with the NEXEDGE® system and it was an easy decision to place my order for a 5 channel trunked system for my new PAMR network”.

The final system took just two days to commission and went live in November 2013.

A clear focus on waste

Cairns had established that the coverage his network was capable of providing, particularly when using mobile radios in vehicles with roof mounted antennas, was best suited to customers using commercial vehicles in multi-drop operations. Among the first subscribers to his network was Gowing & Pursey, one of the leading waste management companies in Greater London who operate a fleet of over 40 vehicles.

“The service has proven to be competitively priced and 100% reliable”

Seamus Cunningham, Transport Manager at Gowing & Pursey reports: “To offer a responsive service to our customers, we need to ensure that we optimise our fleet, allocating resources efficiently - and that is only possible if we can keep in contact with all our vehicles instantly while they are on the road. The service provided by RF Lincs suits us perfectly. They take care of everything from setting up our dispatch center to installing the mobile radios - and they are on hand to help if we ever get into any difficulties.

The service has proven to be competitively priced and 100% reliable and we have not experienced any coverage black spots”.

“... we are now looking to extend NEXEDGE® digital to our other networks”

The success of the new London system has caused Cairns to review his other networks and concludes: “Given the success of the London system, we are now looking to extend NEXEDGE® digital to our other networks”.

For more information

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