INMARSAT, GLOBAL MARINE NETWORKS AND NETWORK INNOVATIONS DELIVER SUCCESSFUL TRIAL

On 22 February Inmarsat together with Global Marine Networks and Network Innovations, announced the successful trial and subsequent commercial order for Fleet Xpress in Antarctic waters. Fleet Xpress had earlier been installed in the adventure cruise ship Ocean Nova (illustrated), and was reported to have delivered robust communications in one of the most hostile environments.

Fleet Xpress, the hybrid Ka and L-band service using Inmarsat’s Global Xpress network, delivers the world’s first globally available high-speed broadband service from a single network operator. The trial was successfully conducted in the 1992-built ice class Ocean Nova, owned by Nova Cruising Ltd and operated by Nova Logistics, a polar expedition specialist.

Said Dr Luis Soltero, Chief Technology Officer of Global Marine Networks: ‘Our customers rely on us to provide cutting-edge satellite services. Fleet Xpress delivered on its promise of high-speed seamless mobile broadband service in one of the world’s most difficult areas for most satellite systems. Antarctica requires low-horizon satellite views through heavy cloud cover and precipitation. Fleet Xpress successfully overcame these conditions.’

In this trial, Network Innovations, one of Inmarsat’s first value-added resellers of Fleet Xpress, was able to provide its expertise and support to Global Marine Networks and the crew of Ocean Nova which used a Cobham SAILOR 100GX antenna.

Noting the first-rate performance of the Fleet Xpress service throughout the trial, Eric Verheylewegen, Vice President and General Manager of Network Innovations commented on the successful outcome of tests aboard the Ocean Nova: ‘Throughout this test, the Fleet Xpress service allowed passengers and crew to conduct daily communication activities beyond our expectations in this extreme location. Now they have decided to install Fleet Xpress, we could not be more satisfied with the results.’

Ronald Spithout, President of Inmarsat Maritime commented: ‘This trial marks another important milestone for the launch of Fleet Xpress. By testing Fleet Xpress in such harsh conditions we are pushing the boundaries of what we can offer. Fleet Xpress is set to redefine maritime communications and will transform the way vessels are managed and optimised throughout the globe. We are thrilled that Nova Cruising Ltd have chosen to rely on and invest in Fleet Xpress with a commercial order for the rest of their fleet.’