

Digitalisation partner to the fishing industry

With the increased emphasis on sustainability, catch traceability, and compliance in the modern Spanish fishing industry, satellite communication is undoubtedly making an impact on the efforts to digitalise operations and crew welfare services. As a reliable international service operator, IEC Telecom is committed to empowering vessel owners with integrated and scalable communication services that ensure improved safety for the crew and better working conditions onboard small and mid-sized vessels, as highlighted by Gwenaël Loheac, President, Europe and West Africa at IEC Telecom and also Chief Procurement Officer for the Group. Mr. Loheac also shares his thoughts on the future of satcom and IEC Telecom's changing role in the satcom ecosystem.

With international offices in Denmark, France, Kazakhstan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Turkey, and UAE, IEC Telecom Group serves not only the maritime industry but also offers solutions for remote units on land, where GSM coverage is not available. For urban networks, the company provides a powerful satellite backup to ensure the business continuity of customer enterprises.

The fishing industry in general and the Spanish fishing sector, in particular, is an important market for the company. In 2018, the Spanish fleet comprised of 8,972 vessels, with 96% in the fishing sector. At Navalia 2022, the most important trade show for this sector in Spain, IEC Telecom notably showcased Iridium GMDSS, which delivers safety services at 25% of the cost of current equipment, enabling more fishing vessels to access life-saving and efficient sea-to-shore communications. In addition, IEC

Telecom presented its VSAT offer for mid-sized vessels over the GX60 NX Ka/Ku terminal, which can easily be installed and quickly deployed.

“Digitalisation enables the fishing sector to have more control over its vessel operations and benefit from many of the advances, previously reserved for large VSAT-equipped vessels,” says Mr. Loheac. “Thanks to recent developments such as compact, easy-to-install antennas and versatile network management systems, fishing vessels and other workboats are able to enjoy high levels of connectivity over least-cost routing, utilising lower bandwidth connections and GSM to maintain connectivity whether the vessel is close to shore or deep at sea.”

While committed to future-proofing the fishing industry, IEC Telecom itself is also readying itself for the future of satcom. There is a lot going on in this industry: the increasing number of satcom players is expected to lead to an oversupply of

satellite services, notably. Mr. Loheac expects that airtime will no longer be seen as an exclusive resource but rather a service expected by default. He sees the emergence of the Metaverse and the younger generation of digital natives entering the maritime sector as two other major developments boosting the demand for ever greater levels of connectivity. “In this ever-evolving landscape, we are gradually shifting focus from the material world (hardware) to a virtual space (via an innovative range of applications and digitally-driven services) provided on an As-a-Service mode. Moving incrementally in this direction, we expect that the next big thing in satcom will be the broad adoption of AI-driven platforms. Capable not only to process and transfer data, AI will also offer operational suggestions for human decision-makers. In this context, IEC Telecom envisions itself as a service enabler, making the latest technologies available to all vessel types through advanced network optimisation.”



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