

German operator selects FleetBroadband after trials

Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement has committed to FleetBroadband following the completion of successful trials carried out in conjunction with Stratos

A three-month field trial with FleetBroadband has been conducted on board the German container ship *Marianne Schulte*, managed by Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement (BSM). The ship is operating in European waters and the Caribbean area, using a Thrane & Thrane Sailor 500 terminal installed by Telaccount Overseas.

On board, FleetBroadband was integrated with AmosConnect to manage all e-mail traffic. Other applications subject to evaluation during the trial included Bernhard Schulte's office applications, remote support via Ultra VNC, instant messaging, video chat, large file transfer and, of course, web-browsing.

"As a busy vessel carrying a valuable cargo, we need to maintain contact with our shore office in Shanghai every day," said *Marianne Schulte's* master, Captain Abraham Mohan. "Right from the beginning we experienced no problems using FleetBroadband for key operational tasks. We found it simple to use and reliable. The voice channel is very clear, and data transfer is considerably faster than with our previous system."

Following the trial's completion, Bernhard Schulte decided to retain the system on board. Captain Mohan added that the positive experience led the company to recommending the system to 15 of its shipowner customers.

Adonis Violaris, group marketing and communications director for BSM and director of Telaccount Overseas, said the trial provided an opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons of a new technology. "We were very satisfied with the performance because we managed to run all our office applications from the vessel over FleetBroadband."

Stratos partner One Net assisted BSM with many aspects of the *Marianne Schulte* field trial, including the provision of training on Stratos Dashboard and AmosConnect.

One Net director Michalis Hadjistylianou explained that the system installed on *Marianne Schulte* was operated under strict cost-control rules to prevent wasteful bandwidth consumption,



FleetBroadband on Marianne Schulte was operated under strict cost-control rules

using the flexibility of Stratos Dashboard. As a result, the vessel is transmitting significantly higher data volumes than before the trial, but at the same spending levels.

The BSM field trial was one in an extensive global series of trials that Stratos is conducting to secure feedback from shipmanagers on FleetBroadband and wide range of value-added services from Stratos.

Stratos president and chief executive officer Jim Parm said: "Our field trials are generating a very high level of positive feedback. Managers of some of the world's largest commercial vessels are finding that FleetBroadband from Stratos provides optimal applications performance, along with excellent security and support."

The maritime communications reseller recently became the first of Inmarsat's distribution partners to reach 1,000 FleetBroadband activations since the service was launched at the end of 2007. Activations are said to encompass all major geographic regions and vessel types, from customers including Wallem Shipmanagement, BSM, Varun Shipping, MISC Berhad, and the Royal Netherlands Navy.

The sales milestone came in the same week that Inmarsat announced that its FleetBroadband service has become fully operational on the third and final satellite in the I4 constellation. As a result, ships crossing the Pacific Ocean will now be able to enjoy Internet access at up to 432 kbps.

Meanwhile, JSAT Mobile Communications, a joint venture company established last August by Stratos and Japan's leading satellite operator Sky Perfect JSAT, has been granted a radio licence by the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications.

The official licence means the company is now authorised to offer Inmarsat FleetBroadband mobile satellite communications services on Japanese-registered vessels. Other shareholders in JSAT Mobile include Furuno Electric and Japan Radio Co. **MEC**



The Thrane & Thrane Sailor 500 terminal was installed by Telaccount Overseas