

Satellite News Gathering – L-3 Satellite Networks Safari Flyaway Used to Cover Kursk Submarine Tragedy

MIR TV selected L-3 Satellite Networks to provide its digital Safari Flyaway Satcom Terminal for satellite news gathering (SNG) assignments throughout Russia and internationally.

The Situation

MIR is an inter-governmental organization, founded in 1994 by the Presidents of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), formerly the Soviet Union. An international TV and radio company, MIR now runs the vast network of former state-controlled earth stations and satellites and is fast establishing itself as the major uplink operator in Russia and the CIS. For remote SNG activities, MIR required a terminal that could be quickly and easily deployed, and provide broadcast quality video, voice and data.

The Solution

MIR selected a digital **Flyaway** from L-3 Satellite Networks. Its Super Light Safari **Flyaway** is the ultimate satellite news gathering earth station: it's compact; it offers broadcast quality MPEG2/DVB compliant video; and it can use various satellite systems, including both the INTELSAT and PanAmSat systems. The Safari **Flyaway** offers a host of cutting-edge, flexible technical features.

The MIR Flyaway has been used for various news stories in Russia, but perhaps the most dramatic was the August 2000 Kursk submarine tragedy in the Barents Sea.

On the first day of coverage, using the **Super Light Safari Flyaway**, the MIR team completed 40 live and tape transmissions. The following day another Russian agency hired the **Flyaway** and the team found themselves on a helicopter heading out into the Barents Sea.



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The **Super Light Safari Flyaway** was the only dish allowed on board the Russian Navy cruiser Peter the Great, with permission from the Russian Navy granted only for Russian State Television. Other SNG operations, including a host of television crews, remained on shore, where they were only allowed to use some of the RTR pictures.

Broadcasting was a technical challenge due to the rough weather and heavy seas. Despite the absence of a gyroscope to stabilize the aerial, and the need to rely on manual tuning by the technical crew, the Safari **Flyaway** operated successfully throughout the week-long ordeal. The **Flyaway** was used almost non-stop, and never lost a single transmission.

The Benefits

- Smallest, lightest SNG flyaway available on the market today.
- C- or Ku- band worldwide operation.
- Broadcast quality MPEG2/DVB compliant digital video.
- Integrated subsystem design for lowest weight, highest efficiency.
- Transit cases meet IATA checked baggage rules.
- Fast, one-person setup – 30 minutes without tools.
- Lightweight rugged UNIFOLD pedestal provides wide stable foot print and quick set-up.
- Vehicle mount option for dual-use operation.
- GPS NAV and Satellite Locator – works anywhere in the world.
- Full remote monitor and control from a laptop computer.



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