

# Thuraya EnergyComms provides Alkan and MCS with vital communication links to keep oilfield data flowing

**Case Study:**

*Thuraya EnergyComms*

**Client:**

*Alkan  
Modern Computing  
Services (MCS)*

**Product:**

*Thuraya IP*

**Application:**

*MCS Video  
Broadcasting*

**Area of Operations:**

*Mediterranean Sea &  
The Middle East*



Thuraya provides critical communications to keep oilfield data flowing.

The international oil and gas industry defines the concept of a '24x7 business'. Perhaps more than in any other sector, energy exploration and production companies expect predictable operations around the clock.

In a business where the impact of stopped production resulting from a breakdown can be measured in millions of dollars, oil companies look to providers of oilfield services for solutions that keep products flowing safely.

When specialist oilfield services contractor MCS wanted to transmit video streams from its subsea pipeline inspection module to its clients, it turned to Thuraya service partner, Alkan Telecom for a solution that would keep reliable and continues data flow.

The risk of a serious anomaly or

equipment failure in a subsea structure has the potential to cause environmental and economic catastrophe. To improve risk management procedures, oil and gas operators have invested in systems that provide real time monitoring, enabling them to make better decisions on maintenance and intervention on subsea pipelines and platforms.

In response, MCS used its IT expertise to develop the ROV Pipeline Commander, an application suite which enables inspection, maintenance and monitoring of underwater pipelines, with actual seabed conditions relayed via a video stream.

This operation, which sends the video feed from the subsea ROV to a support vessel on the surface for transmission to the client often takes place in poor weather and harsh environments, meaning that the technology employed must be robust and reliable whatever the conditions.



The MCS video application is a high compression, real time client server video package, specifically tailored for offshore ROV operations.

Advanced high quality compression



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technology makes it the ideal solution to stream live video over the internet to company offices, as well as to personal devices such as smartphones and tablets.

The system is already in use in the Mediterranean Sea where it is deployed in offshore concessions with several energy companies and across the Middle East, including the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arabia. Near-term plans will see the system rolled out in oilfields off Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam over the next two years.

MCS had previously transmitted video data streams to shore via satellite but needed a new solution that offered better value and could be relied upon to operate without the intervention of the ship-based teams.

"We had very specific deliverables to meet our connectivity challenges," explains MCS Chief Executive, Wael Bakr. "Knowing that the minimum bandwidth required to run a live video

stream is 50 kilobits per second meant we must use satellite communications, which in the past we found economically unfeasible. In addition, installing traditional maritime satellite communications equipment can be a logistical challenge. We needed a highly capable, highly mobile system at the right price."

MCS had tough technology demands too. Image quality needed to be good enough to provide clients with high resolution video, as the pictures would be used to support maintenance and operational decisions. Given the need for high reliability, MCS also wanted technical support that could troubleshoot any issues as they occurred so that any outages in transmission could be kept to an absolute minimum.

For a solution to these challenges, MCS turned to Thuraya's Egypt-based service partner Alkan Telecom. Alkan operates in 16 countries, providing satellite and wireless-enabled mobility solutions and Sales Director, Wesam Muhammad says its previous experience with Thuraya products meant it



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had no hesitation in suggesting that MCS deploy the Thuraya IP terminal.

"MCS had used other satellite systems before but found them both expensive and inconvenient. They needed a solution that would be highly mobile and which delivered strong return on investment in a short timeframe. We introduced them to the Thuraya IP terminal, combined with the Spacecom Marine Antenna and they immediately saw that this was the answer to their needs," he explains.

At just 1.4kg, the Thuraya IP terminal is very lightweight – almost half the weight of comparable terminals – but supports fast data rates of 384kbps streaming and 444kbps for standard IP transmission.

Thanks to the power of Thuraya's L-Band satellites, the terminal requires only a small antenna to acquire a GPS fix and connect to the network for fast connection speeds. The terminal is also simple to set up and use, so any personnel with basic computer proficiency can get connected very easily.

Having experienced the Thuraya IP in action, both MCS and Alkan reported

results that exceeded their expectations.

"Thanks to the fully-integrated Thuraya IP solution, our clients can benefit from high resolution video which supports their business decisions with a clear crystal images," says Wael. "Deploying the Thuraya IP has allowed us to provide broadcast video streams at an economically feasible cost to our clients. We now have a smart, mobile solution that requires little space and no complex logistics to install."

For Alkan, the contract has seen them extend their relationship with MCS and provided a useful means of demonstrating the possibilities that the Thuraya system presents. Muhammad says he and the Alkan sales team have used samples of the MCS video stream to demonstrate the speed and quality the Thuraya terminal can deliver.

Potential clients have been impressed by the lack of jitter and congestion in the stream, which is higher quality than more expensive solutions.

"We worked very closely with Thuraya to deliver this solution to MCS and that support was critical in fulfilling the client's requirements to balance the need for bandwidth with the right price to quality ratio. In the oil and gas industry your reputation is very important because even though it's a global market, oil and gas people tend to share their experiences. If they like your solution they will tell their colleagues so it's important that the story is the right one!"

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