

Described by the IBC daily as 'the most outside of outside exhibits', the official launch of SKYLINK at IBC 2003 was a huge success.

Broadcasters from as far afield as Malaysia and Australia registered their interest in this new airborne video relay service which guarantees live pictures from mobile sports or news events whatever the weather.

To demonstrate the full capabilities of SKYLINK, tpc, GlobalLink, Lions Air and QinetiQ, staged a live broadcast from a mock event set-up some 40km north of Amsterdam.



*Stephen Watson
Product Manager, QinetiQ*

The 30 minute show involved the live relay of analogue and digital video links via a PILATUS PC-12 airborne platform circling above the event at an altitude of 30,000 feet. One camera was fixed and located at a petrol station, the other was vehicle mounted and was driven around the local towns.

The demonstration was described as 'very impressive' by Dave

www.skylink.aero (Sep 03)



SKYLINK was the first exhibition stand on the way into the RAI

Remnant, Sales Manager from Link Research, whose low delay digital video link system was used to provide one of the downlinks.

Harnessing the advantages of relaying video signals from a high altitude platform has been the dream of facility providers and programme makers for many years. SKYLINK realises these aspirations through the combining of military antenna technology and the perfect aeroplane platform.

The uplink signals are received on the PC-12 by a phased array antenna that can track 4 different video transmitters at the same time. With enough room for three of these QinetiQ antennas,

the plane is able to relay up to 12 video links.

Not only does the PC-12 fly above the weather, but it can do so for over 7 hours before refuelling. This aeroplane, owned and operated by Lions Air, has a slow cruise speed enabling it to stay directly above the event - a triangular flight path of 1.5km has been used for some broadcasts.

Supplying the radio comms, video equipment and co-ordinating the service on the ground was the team from tpc and GlobalLink.

With bookings already confirmed for 2003 and 2004, it looks as if the SKYLINK system has well and truly taken off!



Reto Zimmermann, GlobalLink tracks the downlink during the live show