

## Raytheon's ARA-1 used to assist in flight coordination for emergency air ambulance service

Alberta's Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) has improved its emergency communications at its new Grande Prairie base by deploying Raytheon's ARA-1.

Using the ARA-1, an interoperability device that provides an interface between a radio and an IP-based network using SIP, STARS communications specialists can now communicate in a more timely and efficient manner.

The new Grande Prairie base is the third STARS base in Alberta joining Calgary and Edmonton. With the addition of this base, the STARS service area now covers nearly 94% of Alberta's population as well as several communities in south and north-eastern British Columbia.

With the addition of the Grande Prairie base in November 2006, STARS was in need of a communications device that can reliably connect their radios to their standards based protocol, SIP devices. The communications devices needed to be reliable as STARS provides airborne intensive care and it needed to be robust to accommodate current systems in place and a wide area network.

STARS decided to purchase two ARA-1 devices for vital dispatch and flight coordination of the STARS air ambulance in the Grande Prairie region. When an emergency situation occurs and emergency medical air transport is required in one of the STARS service areas, a 911 dispatcher calls communications specialists at the

STARS Emergency Link Centre to request assistance. The STARS communication specialist then determines the patient's location, type of injury and necessary response.

Using the ARA-1, they pre-alert the STARS transport team for a possible dispatch and if a helicopter is required, secure a helicopter landing zone and determine patient transport logistics.



**Raytheon's ARA-1 used at STARS**

"After struggling to get another vendor's equipment to function properly, we called Raytheon. Our decision to purchase two ARA-1's was based on the products use of standards based protocol (SIP) and Raytheon's ability to respond to our specific requirement in a timely manner," said Greg Ursel, director of information systems for STARS.

"During my initial meeting with STARS, I found out that they planned to use the ARA-1s for their communications efforts during life saving events. Upon knowing this,

Raytheon quickly processed the shipment for a Saturday delivery so STARS would have the units as soon as possible to help in their efforts," said Rich Nowakowski, regional sales manager for Raytheon in Canada.

"The ARA-1s were extremely easy to setup and use. Within 1.5 hours of receiving the ARA-1s, we had the devices up and running with our current communications equipment and our problem was resolved," Ursel added.

STARS currently uses one of the ARA-1s at the Grande Prairie remote base. The ARA-1 at this site connects the

base radio to the organization's wide area IP network.

The other ARA-1 is used at the main Calgary base to connect to their Zetron console and wide area IP network.

STARS is assessing their needs for their other bases in Calgary and Edmonton.

The ARA-1 is ideal for STARS because it enables their SIP-based telephone users at the STARS Emergency Link Centre to communicate with radio users over the wide area they cover and enables them to connect all of their remote sites.

Since STARS assists with emergency medical response, each second counts.

The ARA-1 has simplified STARS communications response and has decreased the time it takes to properly transmit a message to its intended recipient.

"I am very satisfied with the entire process of purchasing an ARA-1 from Raytheon. Sales support, product capability, training and post sales support have been excellent," Ursel added.

#### **About STARS:**

The Alberta Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) is a non-profit, charitable organization providing airborne intensive care to critically ill and injured patients. Emergency medical communications, education and research, fundraising and community partnerships are also significant pillars of the STARS program. Since it began in 1985, STARS has flown more than 14,000 missions. For more information, please visit STARS online at <http://www.stars.ca>.

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Keyword: ARA-1

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