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## Icom Wins NYC Transit Order for Nearly 9,000 F70 Series Radios

As part of their goal to build a "state-of-the-art communication-based signal system to replace the mechanical signals dating to 1904," NYC Transit is now using a custom system of more than 8,800 Icom F70 radios to manage fleet-wide communications across their train, subway and bus system.

With 47,000 employees working a network that covers more than 5,000 square miles, and using 734 train stations, efficient communication is the lifeblood of a system that 8 million passengers in all five New York boroughs and surrounding counties each day.

The RFP went out last year, and the competition was tough, but the requirements were even tougher.

"NYC Transit needed nearly 9,000 radios, each customized for the operator who was using it," reports Chris Lougee, Vice President of Icom America Inc. "Beyond that, they needed things like custom



firmware, custom circuit boards that could be swapped, a database allowing them to track every radio and even engraving on the hardware itself. All of which they wanted to be able to maintain themselves and train people on, which meant the winning bid would also be creating training manuals and teaching NYC Transit's own technicians how to physically maintain the hardware."

In December 2010, Icom delivered 8,825 of these highly customized packages to NYC Transit. Each package contained: an engraved radio, belt clip, antenna, charger, extra extended life battery, noise cancelling speaker microphone, adjustable shoulder strap, and a user manual. All the equipment is intrinsically safe, each serial number is part of



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## NYC Transit *(continued)*



a customized database enabling them to track each radio and all of them include safety features like a man-down function. And, as requested, Icom will be training NYC Transit's technicians to repair the radios, as well as providing spare parts and 300 printed circuit boards for swapping.

"This is what we do, it's what makes Icom special," explains Lougee. "We are a big enough company that we can deliver top-of-the-line equipment at a competitive price. But we're also nimble enough that we can customize any aspect of an order to meet a client's unique needs. Further, because so many of our operations are domestic, we have relationships with vendors who can do everything from engraving to custom leather carrying cases. That's what makes us different."

Indeed, as big as this project was, it is right in line with what Icom has done for clients all over the world, in both the

public and the private sector. Icom has put together similar packages for the public and private sector alike: The US Army and Marine Corps, the Afghan National Police, Iraqi Minister of the Interior, the US

National Park Service and JC Penney, among others.

The NYC Transit project, as many of Icom's projects have been lately, is geared towards migrating existing communication systems to meet or exceeds the FCC's narrowband regulations that go into effect in 2013. These new radios not only meet the narrowband standards, but are interoperable with existing legacy systems and upgradable to P25 digital in the future. This makes it possible for organizations of all sizes to upgrade at a pace that is feasible while building a system that will last well into the digital future.

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*Each radio was customized for the operator who was assigned to use it. That included custom engraving on each radio, each radio leather case, and custom package ID stickers.*

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Interoperability with an eye to the future is a hallmark of Icom equipment, which is also used by Amtrak and other AAR carriers like BNSF, CSX and other major transport companies.

"This is a great time for all of us," says Lougee. "The switch to greater efficiency is an obvious win for operators, and because of our relationships and attention to detail, we've seen clients create systems that seemed out of their reach just a short time ago. It's very rewarding for us to be able to do this."



*Above: Taking the A train under the streets of Manhattan.*

*Center: Inside Manhattan's Grand Central Terminal.*

*Below: A typical MTA bus makes its way thru the city.*



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## Baltimore Dealer & System Owner Gains Channels, Functionality and Clients with IDAS™



In December 2010, Bruce Pellicot of Howard Communications built the first IDAS trunking system in Baltimore, to serve his clients communication needs. Though he has built and maintained complex communication systems for the past 25 years, this system, using Icom FR6000 repeaters, is literally a bridge to the future of communication. And for at least one client, the future couldn't come soon enough.

"I got a frantic call from a client," Bruce explains, "saying 'we need a 2-way system now.' So we talked about everything from efficiency to reach to security, and it was clear that we needed to get digital and start trunking, and that's what we did."

Like many people, Bruce's client, Veolia Transportation in Baltimore, had



pieced together a system using Nextels and mobile phones. As a company that operates fleets of both taxicabs and paratransit vehicles, efficiency can literally be a matter of life and death for Veolia. As such, dealing with dead spots, lost calls, dead batteries, talk-time fees and static on the line is more than just an inconvenience.

*Beyond just spectral efficiency, this IDAS trunked digital system offers features like complete privacy, GPS functionality, limitless talk time, text, and nearly infinite scalability.*

However, just getting new analog devices seemed pointless, as Bruce points out that the digital transition is both inevitable and a smart business decision. "I have talked to other dealers, and it is clear that we're headed all digital. The FCC is making everyone go narrowband anyway, but digital takes it another step.

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**Icom America Inc.**  
2380 116th Ave NE  
Bellevue, WA 98004  
Phone: (425) 454-8155  
Fax: (425) 454-1509  
Customer Service: (425) 454-7619

**Icom America Systems**  
Phone: (425) 586-6363  
Fax: (425) 586-6321  
ias@icomamerica.com

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## Baltimore IDAS *(continued)*



At 6.25 kHz, this is way beyond the FCC requirements that everyone be narrow-band by 2013.”

Beyond just spectral efficiency, this trunked digital system offers features like complete privacy, GPS functionality, limitless talk time, text, and nearly infinite scalability. In fact, Veolia is preparing to add data terminals to all the mobiles, which will work through the IDAS system. More than that, it’s simple.

“It took us a week to get it up and running,” reports Bruce. “And with that, our client got a F6061D base station, 29 vehicles set up, and the portables that they needed, all working on a digital system

that I can grow for them as they need it.”

With 3 channels up and running now, Bruce’s system covers Baltimore and a 25-mile radius around the city. However, he is licensed for 8 channels using his new IDAS system, and is quickly bringing on both new and existing clients. The same efficiency that serves Veolia will enhance business operations for delivery fleets, first-responders, campus managers and any other organization needing flawless communication between many units and over a wide geographic area.

Additionally, it’s the only system of its kind in Baltimore, and a giant leap forward for everyone in the area. As fleet-managers scramble to meet FCC requirements, Bruce will be able to not only add users, but is already planning to expand his coverage area with additional stations.

“This is precisely what the IDAS system is designed to do,” says Mark Behrends, National Sales Manager for Icom America. “The IDAS system was created to help migrate from analog to digital, and increase features as needed, without getting trapped in an outdated system that can be hard and expensive to maintain. With handheld, mobiles, repeaters and accessories, this system can meet the needs of a variety of users, from local delivery services to first responders and anyone else.”

The radios in the IDAS system are backwards compatible, so something as simple as replacing a handset is a step towards building a future system. While the analog functionality will work with existing repeaters, the digital capabilities open up all the possibilities of a digital network, allowing users to grow at their own pace.

“It’s where we’re heading,” confirms Bruce. This is what Icom has been building for years; a simple and efficient digital system that brings clients to the future, without missing a beat.



*Icom’s FR6000 is the heart of the new Howard Communication’s system.*

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**Meet Your Icom Team**

**Aaron Slagle**  
Advertising Manager



*Icom America's pleased to announce the promotion of Aaron Slagle to his new position of Advertising Manager.*

*No stranger to Icom, Aaron's already worked here nearly 13 years, the past nine as Senior Graphic Designer.*

*As Advertising Manager, Aaron is in charge of all things... well, advertising, as well as Icom America's Website and tradeshows programs. He manages a staff of seven and works with all divisions within Icom.*

*Aaron comments: "Though I plan to remain 'hands-on' with the creative process, the new role will certainly be a change from my normal day-to-day. I'm excited for the opportunity to lead our creative department into the next chapter!"*

**New IDAS System Connects Hunter College Campuses across Manhattan**

Icom America is pleased to announce the sale of an IDAS 6.25 kHz digital radio system to Hunter College, the largest college in the City University of New York (CUNY) system. The new system integrates the college's five Manhattan campus locations and provides instant, direct communication for increased campus safety and operational efficiency.

"Instant communication is vital to our role on each of the campuses. We oversee the safety of five campuses and 23,000 students in Manhattan's crowded, urban setting," says Louis Mader, Director of Public Safety for Hunter College. "Two-way radio provides instantaneous communication with our personnel, allowing us to respond quickly during emergency situations."

The college's administration, facilities management and information technology departments share the system with the public safety department. The new IDAS system has increased organizational efficiency across the various departments by allowing administrators to oversee operations and directly communicate with personnel in multiple locations.

Hunter College's unique hybrid system consists of an IDAS conventional voting system on the main campus connected via IP to the remote campus sites. A high-powered IAS 100DV repeater at the main campus provides 100 watt output, easily penetrating the heavy steel and concrete structures of New York City to reach the college's remote campus locations. The IAS 100DV repeater also features 100 percent duty cycle, battery backup and redundant power supply to ensure reliable communications for the public safety department. At its smaller, remote



campus locations, the college installed Icom CY-6000 digital + analog repeaters.

"The new system allows us to communicate directly with all five campuses," says Mader, whose department oversees all law enforcement, EMT and fire response for Hunter College. "We can communicate with the other campuses from our location, and they also can communicate directly with each other."

The system includes 205 IDAS IC-F4161 digital portable radios. Built to IP55 requirements for dust protection and water resistance, Icom's F3161/F4161 Series portable ensures reliable operation even in severe weather and harsh environmental conditions. Additional radio features include a full selection of built-in signalings, enhanced audio and 512 memory channels.

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**Accessory of the Month**

**Icom's Newest P25 Mobiles and Portables Meet DHS CAP Requirements**



*RedHawk SA is a new speaker mic accessory carried exclusively by Icom America Systems. With its GPS on LCD display, get total dismounted situation awareness, right in your hand.*

*Available for Icom's P25 radios as well as select IDAS radios – even mobiles. Ideal for:*

- Military
- Police
- Search and Rescue

*Coming mid April 2011.*

Icom is pleased to announce its IC-F9011/F9021 portable and IC-F9511/F9521 mobile P25 radios are Compliance Assessment Program (CAP)-compliant. CAP is a voluntary program that demonstrates a supplier's equipment meets defined P25 standards in performance, and interoperability.

Public safety agencies receiving federal grant money for P25 equipment are required to purchase CAP-compliant equipment. Federal grants are widely available for public safety agencies interested in buying mission-critical equipment.

The CAP program requires manufacturers to submit products to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognized test laboratories for a stringent assessment process, which includes performance and interoperability testing.

Manufacturers also are required to provide a Supplier's Declaration of Compliance (SDoC), specifying the equipment tested and the DHS-identified lab performing the test supply pass/fail data for each of the tests. The FEMA Responders Knowledge Base (RKB) Website [www.rkb.us](http://www.rkb.us) lists the summary test results (STR).

Icom is among a limited number of manufacturers currently offering CAP-compliant P25 equipment. "We are at the cusp of the trend," says Chris Lougee, Vice President of Icom America.

Icom's CAP-compliant radios meet IP57 certification requirements and are backwards-compatible with legacy equipment. Radio power has been increased to 6 watts. The cosmetic interoperable layout of the switches, knobs, and dials has been accepted as an industry standard. The radios are also easy to merge into fleets of radios. And the Icom radios have an enhanced vocoder, which is very important to firefighters.

Lougee anticipates a strong market for CAP-compliant P25 equipment. There are some 3,000 counties throughout the country with three to five agencies each. In the end, Lougee says, "P25 is driven by the need of end users."



**P25CAP**



Icom CAP documents may be viewed at <https://www.rkb.us/search.cfm?typeid=5&subtypeid=710>

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## Icom's On Top of Mt. Everest – Again!



Tom Ohlsson of Red Dog Radios in Louisville, CO sent in this story regarding Icom radios being used to once again summit Mt Everest:

"I thought I'd share some photos I received recently from Scott Woolums who operates an extreme adventure program headquartered at Mt. Hood, OR.

Everything was solar powered including the 6-position bank charger and the F121. They operate in the 2m amateur band and I special ordered a 3-element collapsible Yagi tuned to 146.52 with 1.05:1 VSWR. With the F121 running 5 watts, and the Yagi pointed at the climbers, they had consistent full quieting communications for the duration of the expedition. In fact, at one point they were in contact with the Chinese climbers coming up on the \*other\* side of the mountain with nearly full quieting. Everyone was very happy with the Base Camp radio performance.

Some of the Sherpas were equipped with full 1/4 wave 2m whip antennas and

speaker mics "just in case" they needed the extra performance. There were no incidents. In addition, not seen in any of these photos, I built a heavy duty, collapsible, 2m ground plane antenna, with threaded/removable elements, with a PVC base, that fits inside a 3" diameter, 24 in long tube, with a BNC/Icom threaded adapter that they used at Camps 1 and 2, that is, a ground plane antenna connected via coax to the F14 for a better antenna. Again, full quieting at all times.

They are planning another expedition this year and will be buying more Icom gear. It's not going to be a big sale, but, having your name, brand and products on top of the world is pretty exciting!"

*Note: It is the responsibility of the radio operator to ensure that the proper frequency permits are secured and/or that the local amateur radio laws are observed before using any ham radio frequencies – even in areas as remote as Mt. Everest.*

## IWCE 2011 Draws in the Crowds



Icom featured many new radios, systems and accessories in its IWCE 2011 booth. The show ran from March 7 – 9 in Las Vegas. Although attendance was about the same as last year, everyone felt as if the show was busier overall.

Making its show debut was MultiTrunk, aka IDAS multi-site digital trunking. (See last month's newsletter.) MultiTrunk was demonstrated both in our booth and in the lobby kiosk display. Our ads have been running in Mission Critical Communications, Urgent Communications, UTC, and Rural Electric magazines.

Launched in February, Icom's two new IDAS radios – the F5121D series mobiles and F3101D series portables – made their IWCE debut. Also making its first showing was the F5011 analog mo-

bile. All three new models have been well received, and IWCE visitors took notice.

The P25 tables saw a preview of a coming new handheld speaker mic accessory called RedHawk SA. See the sidebar on this page.

Over in Systems, IAS teamed up with Etherstack to have working P25 repeater stacks on display. IAS offers end-to-end P25 solutions, whether its for conventional or for trunking systems – single-site or multi-site. Of course, they're also analog backwards compatible.

Several third-party manufacturers came up with displays in the Icom booth. Telex had a dispatch station set up near the center of the booth, and Otto showcased a host of new options for Icom's F9011 series P25 portables.

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