



UNIQUE COMMS CHALLENGES FOR FESTIVAL



Customer

Brisbane Festival

Industry

Event management

Technology Partner

Motorola Rental Solutions
Ph: 1800 033 520

Need

- Festival communications to enable smooth logistical management and a fantastic and safe festival experience

Benefits

- Widespread, reliable coverage
- Dedicated talk groups
- Great battery life
- Customised programming
- Incident response coordination
- Ease-of-use

“Coverage is awesome, which is really important as we have people all over Brisbane 24/7.”

Skye Murphy, logistics manager, Brisbane Festival

Each September around one million people flock to the Brisbane Festival to experience theatre, music, dance, circus, visual art, film and outdoor events.

Brisbane Festival takes place across indoor and outdoor locations such as South Bank Parklands, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, QUT Creative Industries Precinct at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane Powerhouse, Judith Wright Centre, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), City Hall, Griffith University and many more.

The festival brings a unique and sophisticated set of communication challenges in a time-sensitive, fast-paced environment, and it falls to Skye Murphy, Brisbane Festival logistics manager, to manage the logistical challenge of hosting over 501 events across multiple and unique locations.

For the past 13 years, Motorola Rental Solutions has provided a reliable communications system for the festival. More recently, MTP3250 TETRA two-way radios operating on Zeon Digital have enabled rapid scalability for the required bump-in, festival duration and wrap-up.

Zeon Digital is a purpose-built digital two-way radio network supported by Motorola Solutions and upgraded in preparation for the G20 Summit in 2014. A future-proof communications solution, it delivers unprecedented levels of security and adopts a fully redundant design to ensure maximum availability 24/7, every day of the year.

More than 150 radios – carried by organisers, marshals, production teams, security guards, cleaners, catering staff and the logistics department – keep the event running smoothly. Transport teams convey artists between the airport, hotel and venues, using radio communications to ensure that site inductions, sound checks and welcoming of artists occurs without hitches or delays. Once the festival starts, show people such as producers, lighting crews, sound deck, “call to stage” staff, right down to cleaners use radios to ensure that shows run seamlessly.

Broad, reliable coverage: With such diverse locations in use, adequate coverage is critical, which is where Zeon Digital comes in. “The coverage is awesome,” says Murphy, “which is really important in managing logistics because we have people all over Brisbane 24/7. Sometimes we travel as far as the Gold Coast for equipment or artists, and the radio coverage moves without fault all the way to Coolangatta Airport.”

Dedicated talk groups: Zeon Digital has the capacity to provide a large number of channels/talkgroups, enabling numerous simultaneous conversations – even more than the average network. Small sites at Brisbane Festival use one channel, larger sites use two while South Bank Parklands has up to six dedicated channels to cover show calls and production. Murphy explains that the feature to program radio to radio means that staff can have one-to-one calls as well as conversations requiring discretion.

Great battery life: For long shifts, good battery life is an essential requirement. “I use my radio from 7am until it goes back to the docking station late at night, so battery life is very important. This is especially true for drivers who are out and about with less flexibility to recharge at a docking station”.





Customised programming: “The customised programming is a fantastic service,” says Murphy. The radios must be set up a particular way for the festival, ensuring certain staff can talk to other designated people. Using the fleet map, the Motorola Rental Solutions team program every handset so everyone is on the correct channel/s and connected to the right people. Asset management means each radio is numbered and allocated to correspond with a list of staff names. If a radio does go missing, the capability to remotely disable the handset renders it useless and facilitates its return.

Incident response coordination: “We have one secure emergency channel which only eight to 10 people can access. This improves our incident response and minimises the chance of the wrong people listening in. This is especially important for our major event Sunsuper Riverfire where approximately 500,000 people attend.”

Ease-of-use: Using the radios is relatively easy to pick up, even for those staff unaccustomed or hesitant to use two-way radios. To make things easier, the Motorola Rental Solutions team switch off any capability not required to simplify handset operation.

Remote speaker microphones (RSM): RSMs are used by crews during shows for clearer communications during noisy acts, drivers for discrete communication and security staff at Sunsuper Riverfire to reduce ambient noise and improve audibility.

Working with Motorola Rental Solutions has been “fantastic”, confirms Murphy. “I’d give them 10 out of 10 for attention to detail, great service, flexibility, and for resolving issues quickly.”

