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Trident Sensors wins Queen's Award for multifunction GPS tracker

Trident Sensors has won a Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category for its Polaris tracking system. This highly innovative GPS tracker uses the Iridium satellite constellation to transmit and receive data from anywhere in the world.

Weighing only 500 g, the rugged unit has an advanced design which minimises power consumption, enabling it to operate remotely for long periods and provide live data at intervals as frequent as once every 20 seconds.

"It is wonderful to receive such high level recognition for the Polaris system," said a delighted Helen Cussen, founder and Managing Director of Surrey based Trident Sensors. "We are only a three person company, but we know we have produced an exceptional product that is highly competitive across a range of international markets." Customers include research institutes, blue chip companies and the military.

Helen Cussen and co-director Dr Bill Simpson are oceanographers by background and the original systems were developed for data transmission from remote platforms across the world's oceans. However the Polaris system is ideal for a wider range of applications.

It is being used to transmit weather data from Met Office buoys, for tracking ships and for reprogramming missions for autonomous underwater vehicles whilst at the sea-surface.

In the leisure sector it is used for tracking competitors in adventure sports such as cycling (Mark Beaumont's Round the World Record), yachting (Fastnet Race) and gliding (International Grand Prix).

When used in the defence sector for tracking personnel, Polaris' sensitive motion sensor can even tell when an operative is down. The system also plays a vital part in search and rescue missions.

Polaris uses the Iridium satellite constellation of 66 satellites for two-way communication anywhere in the world, including polar regions. This is possible because the Iridium satellites are in polar orbits, unlike rival systems which do not cover high latitudes.

Trident Sensors was founded in 1997 by Helen Cussen to produce oceanographic instruments and sensors. Its business has expanded to concentrate on live GPS and two way data transmission using the Iridium constellation of satellites.

With fellow director Dr Bill Simpson and the third member of the team, James Simpson, the company designs its own hardware, firmware and software. PCB and component manufacture are subcontracted out, mostly to local companies, while assembly and test are carried out by Trident.

Customers are global, in all fields of GPS tracking and data collection, particularly those operating in high latitudes and harsh, remote environments such as mountains, deserts and oceans.

Applications include deep-sea oceanography, iceberg tracking, personnel and vehicle tracking, yachting and other adventure pursuits, container tracking, and vessel monitoring.

Trident's new satellite track and trace product is called TIGER which has smartphone connectivity via Bluetooth (see the website).

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