



Photo credit: Jake Williams

## KAIKOURA LONGBOARD FESTIVAL , NEW ZEALAND

### THE CLIENT

The Kaikoura Longboard Festival (KLF) is New Zealand's premier downhill skateboarding event, attracting the country's best downhill skateboarders to compete across two days. With scenic views over the beautiful east coast, the track winds down Ocean Ridge Estate, allowing riders in packs of four to navigate six corners at speeds of up to 80km/h (50mph). Event marshals and volunteers coordinate to ensure a smooth experience for hundreds of riders and spectators along the track, featuring such locations as "Carnage Corner". With sudden changes in race or track conditions requiring quick responses to minimize risk, and limited visibility within the team, reliable communication is a must.

### SITUATION

The KLF organizers had previously used a mix of radios, some of which had no interoperability, and which could not provide the coverage and range necessary across the whole track. Marshals along the track were not in constant contact, and several talk groups existed separately without a single point of truth. There were also a few 'dead spots' because of a ridge in the hill. "We worked around it by having a center station where one person would relay the information to the others", says Tom De Rooy, head organizer of the festival. "But in the heat of an event it didn't always happen."

### RESPONSE

After some research, Outback Communications were selected to address the communications issues, and the festival organizers headed into their Christchurch office to explain their needs. Corey Weir from Outback replaced their existing handhelds with Tait TP9310 radios on a commercial frequency - the first year on analog, and then on DMR in 2018. Outback recommended the upgrade after feedback that noise cancellation and improved voice clarity would be ideal for the environment. Another improvement came in the form of multiple channels being added, for marshals to handle unexpected or isolated occurrences that don't impact the whole team. Now



KAIKOURA,  
NEW ZEALAND

LOCATION



SPORTS

EXPERTISE

### SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- ▶ Tait DMR Tier 2 Solution
- ▶ TP9310 radios

### BUSINESS BENEFITS

- ▶ Reliable, clear communications across the hilly downhill track
- ▶ Increased rider safety
- ▶ Increased efficiency and coordination across marshals



marshals all along the track can communicate easily and respond quickly to changes. "The radios are powerful and the charging docks are awesome", said Tom De Rooy. "It was seamless, stress free, and so much simpler".

### **OUTCOMES**

Moving to a Tait solution has provided the KLF team with clear and reliable voice communications every year. Looking to the future, Corey from Outback said "It's good to get the feedback each time they come back, and we always try and learn from it so that next time we deliver more value to the customer". Tom De Rooy adds that the event organizers now have "seamless communication throughout the whole hill, which is so valuable. We couldn't go back to running an event like this without that communication, for safety and practicality. It's just awesome to know that riders are going to get down and be safe."

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**Tom De Rooy**

Head Organizer

Kaikoura Longboard Festival