

CUNARD'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

SIS LIVE streams the historic moment as three of Cunard's luxury liners salute to celebrate its 175th anniversary.

Cunard Line staged a spectacular salute to Liverpool to celebrate its 175th anniversary - and it called on SIS LIVE to ensure the event was shared with as many people as possible worldwide, via multi-platform coverage.

The cruise company's imposing luxury liners - the Queen Mary II, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria - united to sail together along the Mersey for the first time and perform manoeuvres in tribute to the port, its base from 1840 to 1967.

Interest in what promised to be a stunning sight was huge. Cunard sought to maximise brand publicity by providing live simultaneous multi-platform, multi-media coverage. Events were to be

streamed live on Cunard's website, with simultaneous live footage easily available to TV companies via satellite.

Not only were the stars of the show - the three Queens - to be captured by cameras on both sides of the estuary and in a helicopter hovering overhead, but OB crews on the banks would be feeding back vox pops from people connected with the event, as well as members of the public.

In addition, Cunard wanted the large crowds expected to gather on either side of the Mersey to be able to view the historic spectacle live on big screens. The footage had to be consistently reliable and of the highest broadcast quality.

SIS LIVE's standing as the connectivity partner of choice for critical media content meant Cunard tasked it with delivering simultaneous, live multi-media coverage over TV, the internet and big screens on site.

The SIS LIVE project planning team had a very short timeframe to establish which parts of its comprehensive connectivity infrastructure would be best utilised in facilitating the live-to-air coverage. However, its wide live broadcast experience over fibre, satellite, microwave and internet, together with its long-held planning policy of seeking out potential pitfalls and building in contingency plans, meant resilient connectivity was assured.

Project leaders worked closely with Cunard's marketing team



throughout to ensure expectations were met in terms of maximum, consistently excellent brand exposure over multiple media platforms. SIS LIVE's expertise meant it could effectively deliver live broadcast quality coverage simultaneously over each platform.

“SIS LIVE was delighted to be involved in this historic and newsworthy spectacle.”

SIS LIVE also liaised with the local councils about relevant logistics like parking and power supplies, and worked out how to safely run interconnecting cables through crowded public areas. As much rehearsal and facility check time as possible was built in, because the historic 'sail past' was a one-off, and the connectivity had to be robust and resilient.

Three trucks from SIS LIVE's fleet were deployed, all with uplink engineers well practiced in liaising with various camera crews to facilitate live broadcasts. The company also has established working relationships with the UK's major news channels.

The high-profile event, staged on a Bank Holiday Monday in May 2015, attracted crowds estimated at over a million people along both sides of the Mersey.

Every second was captured as the three Queens - which are between 294m and 345m (964ft and 1,132ft) long and can carry a total of more than 9,700 passengers and crew - sailed in unison towards the pier head and carried out various manoeuvres.

SIS 60, SIS LIVE's dual-path, fully-redundant HD truck used for small-scale live productions with up to three cameras, was deployed to Seacombe Ferry Terminal, across from the estuary from the

old Cunard Building on Liverpool's waterfront. It collected footage from OB crews filming the celebrations from the ground and from the overhead helicopter, and uplinked it straight to satellite IS905 using SIS LIVE's dedicated satellite capacity.

SIS 81, sited further along the Mersey at the Woodside Ferry terminal in Birkenhead, and SIS 51, across the Mersey at the Liverpool Echo Arena, then downlinked the feed, provided full audio mix and clean effects, and live-streamed the footage to large screens at both venues.

The UK's national news channels were also able to downlink the feed live from the SIS LIVE satellite, and use it on their news bulletins and current affairs shows.

SIS LIVE's network operations centre in Milton Keynes downlinked all the camera feeds from the satellite and simultaneously provided a live web stream using its in-house streaming farm, and hosted on Cunard's website.

Dave Meynell, managing director, SIS LIVE, said: "SIS LIVE was delighted to be involved in this historic and newsworthy

spectacle. The sight of Cunard's three liners sailing in formation towards Liverpool attracted interest throughout the world, as well as among crowds gathered locally. I am delighted to say our multi-platform streamed footage did justice to what was a stunning and historic sight."

David Noyes, chief executive, Cunard, said: "The day went so smoothly that I am sure anyone

“This could not have happened without the hard work and close collaboration of SIS LIVE.”

watching will have assumed that this was a relatively simple event to arrange. However, both David [Dingle, Cunard Chairman] and I are well aware that this could not have happened without the hard work and close collaboration of SIS LIVE.

"What a way to highlight the city of Liverpool and our magnificent brand, Cunard."

