

MeteorComm™ Powers BNSF's Electronic Train Management Communications

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The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) announced, on January 8th 2007, FRA's approval of BNSF's Product Safety Plan (PSP) allowing BNSF's to implement the Electronic Train Management System (ETMS) on portions of their railroad network.

In commenting on the PSP approval, FRA Administrator Joseph R. Boardman said, "This is a major achievement that marks the beginning of a new era of rail safety."

ETMS requires movement-related information, such as authority limits, speed limits, signal aspects, switch position and work zones delivered reliably in real-time for Wabtec's onboard computer system to process. BNSF realized that its existing data communications infrastructure would not have the capacity and performance needed to move this information between the locomotive, waysides and dispatch center. BNSF turned to MeteorComm's™ MBNET technology to provide a high performance, robust wireless network to meet the demand. MeteorComm™ developed a new Software Defined Radio (SDR) platform for the locomotive industry that contains up to three Part 90 transceivers (VHF and UHF), Wi-Fi and GPS that functions like a router by automatically directing voice and data packets (information) between various wireless networks and on board devices as the locomotive transitions from the yard to line-of-way. The SDR can automatically tune itself to the correct base station using the appropriate Radio Frequency (RF) and data protocols based on its location. Not only does this create seamless communications within BNSF's network but it also allows a BNSF locomotive to be interoperable with other railroad equipment while on their track.

Don Sytsma, MeteorComm™ president and chief executive officer said, "The approval by the FRA to operate ETMS is a milestone for the railroad industry and MeteorComm™ is proud of its SDR platform and engineering team that helped make ETMS possible."

"ETMS is the first approved automatic train control system that prevents train collisions and over speed accidents, meeting the criteria of one the National Transportation Safety Board's most wanted list," said Matthew K. Rose, BNSF chairman, president and chief executive officer.

MeteorComm's™ vision is to provide wireless solutions to the railroad industry for making timely, informed decisions to enhance productivity and safety awareness. BNSF has relied upon MeteorComm™ radios and network protocol to provide wireless communication not only for the ETMS program but their Hy-Rail Limits Compliance System (HLCS) as well.

MeteorComm™ is a wireless telecommunications company that provides reliable, cost effective data communications solutions and services around the world through its robust packet-switched data networks. With over 30 years of technology experience, MeteorComm™ has been serving a diverse customer base that has served industries in railroad, marine, public safety and environmental monitoring.

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