

# EXPLORER enables 'pure Arctic madness'

# COBHAM

Timing is critical for long distance world cup ski race in the mountains of Norway

*When a customer needed accurate live timings of endurance ski race competitors in the mountainous regions of Northern Norway, where mobile or wired Internet is simply not available, Cobham SATCOM's EXPLORER 710 – provided by US registered reseller, Satellite Phone Store - came to the rescue with a reliable satellite connection.*



## Middle of nowhere

When Reistadløpet was co-opted into the Visma Ski Classics championship (the long distance world cup), the race organisers in tandem with the Norwegian Army were faced with a potential hurdle. All of the championship races are televised live throughout Europe, so the need to present accurate timings as competitors pass through designated check points along the route is of paramount importance.

In Reistadløpet, timings collated as skiers complete sprint sections, tackle ascents and, naturally, cross the finish line all contribute towards participants' overall championship standings. However, several checkpoints are located in the mountains. "Call it the middle of nowhere," smiles Norwegian Army officer Leif-Ketil Gamst, who co-ordinated the teams tasked with transmitting competitor timings during the 2018 race. These craggy, unpopulated regions have no mobile or wired internet access, "and that was the challenge facing us in terms of transmitting live results from these areas," Leif-Ketil continues. "Mobile coverage is bad or nonexistent, and there is a limited line of sight directly south to satellites."

## Positive experience

The solution to this conundrum was the deployment of Cobham SATCOM EXPLORER 710 terminals by Satellite Phone Store. "We knew that in combination with ruggedness and portability, EXPLORER 710's ability to maintain total connectivity in any location via Inmarsat's BGAN simultaneous voice and broadband data communications service, would deliver the reliability needed," said Eric Talman, VP Global Solution Satellite Phone Store. "Three two-person teams were sent to the relevant check points in the mountains to set up the computer equipment, with the EXPLORER 710 antenna mounted on a pole to prevent it from being jostled by the movement of spectators in the crowd."

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***“Reistadløpet is now an ongoing part of the long-distance Visma Ski Classics series, so BGAN equipment will be an absolute necessity in the event's coming years. We are very satisfied with the level of support from Satellite Phone Store and Cobham SATCOM, in addition to the user-interface of the equipment.”***

- Leif-Ketil Gamst

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*"Using the EXPLORER 710 in this context was a very positive experience for us," remarks Leif-Ketil. "It was almost plug and play: we pointed the antenna south and, after a minute or two, we were connected. When the teams were in position, they were able to send data from the first to the last runner in the track, without any 'downtime'. The results from each skier's timing chip on passing the check points were sent into the system and successfully displayed, both on TV and online. With the live transmission, there was approximately a three-second delay on the signal from the satellite, but the TV signal had the same delay; so each competitor's name, time and position details came up perfectly synchronized on the live broadcast when the runners passed the line."*

As a ringing endorsement for the efficiency of the EXPLORER 710's BGAN connectivity, it was noted that it held signal even in an area where the team were compelled to walk a further 200m up the mountain before their back-up satellite phone had any coverage.



### About EXPLORER 710

- The world's smallest, lightest and most robust satcom terminal in its class, Cobham SATCOM's EXPLORER 710 BGAN terminal is designed to keep users connected when mobile coverage is out of range and land lines are not available.
- EXPLORER 710 provides broadband Internet and voice calling from anywhere in the world by linking to the Inmarsat satellite network.
- Laptop-sized and extremely portable, the terminal is perfect for professionals including first responders, engineers, scientists and television reporters who are required to work in remote areas and extreme environments.

### About Reistadløpet

- The Reistadløpet ski race has been staged in the county of Troms, in Northern Norway, since 1958. Entrants can choose between 50 km and 34 km tracks. (Children can also participate, in the 'Barnas Reistadløp' race.)
- Reistadløpet was established in memory of Olympic sportsman and Second World War hero Ole Reistad, an air unit commander who led the retaliation against invading Nazi forces in April 1940. Reistad won the cross-country skiing/shooting "military patrol" competition (later to become the biathlon) for Norway in the 1928 Winter Olympics in St Moritz, Switzerland.
- In 2017, Reistadløpet became part of the Visma Ski Classics, a series of 13 long-distance ski races.