



Industry: Sport and Stadia

Poplar Regatta is a popular rowing event held on the River Thames. It is organised by the Poplar, Blackwall & District Rowing Club (PBDRCL), one of the oldest still active rowing clubs in the UK.

The club organises three large rowing events on the Thames every year - the Greenwich Head in February, a processional race between Tower Bridge and Greenwich, the Docklands Head at the Royal Albert and Royal Victoria Docks in Newham, and the Poplar Regatta, also held in the Docklands in May.

After 2011, the Poplar Regatta was not held for 12 years, due to a combination of factors including the London Olympics, regeneration and construction work in the vicinity of the docks, and then COVID. When the Regatta was revived in 2023, the PBDRCL got in touch with Radio Links to ask for help with communications, having continued to work with us on its other events.

Well-versed in the unique challenges that these events pose, we were only too happy to share our expertise to help ensure the races ran smoothly and competitors and spectators alike were kept safe.



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We first recommended an upgrade from analogue to digital radios to the PBDRC several years ago for the Greenwich Head. The shorter range of analogue radios sometimes made signal reliability an issue over the long course. Switching to digital gave the extra coverage needed.

Because of the size of the event, we recommended the PBDRC stick with digital for the revival of the Poplar Regatta. We suggested the Hytera PD705, a rugged and reliable digital model that provides outstanding audio clarity, making it ideal for use at outdoor events.

In addition to the PD705, we also recommended the Hytera PNC380 to the race organisers. A push-to-talk over cellular (PoC) device, the PNC380 offers the universal coverage of a mobile phone but with the simple, reliable functionality of a radio. The PNC380 provided a useful coverage backstop on race day, while its ability to connect to both digital radios and mobile devices makes it a perfect 'middle man' comms solution, giving race coordinators the flexibility to connect to mobile phones to extend the network.

The radios were pre-programmed with four separate channels for umpires, timekeepers, safety teams and general event organisation, allowing multiple conversations to take place at once. As the regatta is held next to London City Airport, we also arranged licences with telecommunications regulator OFCOM to use frequency bands that would not interfere with air traffic comms.



Hytera
PD705



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PNC380