## **News Release**

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## EV® X-LINE™ KEEPS A LOW PROFILE AT LONDON'S OLYMPIC TORCH CEREMONY



London, UK (July 2004): As one looked down The Mall towards Buckingham Palace, it was hard to see a single loudspeaker. Yet substantial Electro-Voice X-Line and X<sup>LC</sup> systems were provided by Britannia Row for the 80,000 people who attended the huge open-air concert, staged in the center of London's great ceremonial avenue, to mark the passage of the Olympic flame through the city on its way to Athens.

Britain's 5-time gold medal winner Sir Steve Redgrave carried the Olympic Torch down its final stretch, the highlight of a major television broadcast which also featured concert performances from Rod Stewart and Ronnie Wood, James Brown, Will Young and Ozzy Osbourne amongst others.

Sound designer Derrick Zieba found himself back in The Mall, where he scored memorable success with the Queen's Jubilee Concert at Buckingham Palace. This time, because it is the middle of the British summer, he and the Brit Row team had to contend with storms, high winds and persistent rain as they set up the system.

"The X-Line arrays were suspended from ten meter smart masts, erected in terrible weather with high gusting winds as the guys tried to hang half a ton of PA," says Zieba. At the stage, which was laid across The Mall with audience on three sides, Britannia Row provided an EV X<sup>LC</sup> system of 32 cabinets, with 16 subs. This handled a nearfield 'ring' of some 30 meters, which housed the VIPs and invited audience.

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The bulk of the audience stretched down the Mall both sides of the stage with a central gap at the Palace end to allow the torchbearer to carry the Olympic flame up to the stage. Because of the highly unusual layout, the PA system was divided into numerous zones. EV's powerful management software IRIS was used in conjunction with BSS Soundweb to manage the distribution of signals to the various zones. EV's Precision Series RL remote-controlled amplifiers, which were powering all the systems on the day, were programmed with all the parameters for the enclosures, and the IRIS software also allowed real-time monitoring of every driver and amplifier via IRIA'S CAN bus network. The excessive distance from the main stage meant that the amplifiers for the delay towers had to be omitted from the network, and so these were pre-programmed at Britannia Row's warehouse, and fine adjustments were made on-site by a temporary connection to a laptop during system set-up.



"At 30 meters out, we had the first of our 14 delay towers which went all the way down The Mall at 138 meter intervals," continued Derrick Zieba. "In total, there was nearly 500m of delay separation, and the way that we arrayed the line arrays on the towers was designed to achieve this projection, which is right on the limit of what you can do with a line array. The sound had to carry from the stage through trees and flags, and, on the day, our worst nightmare, wet trees and flags!"

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56 X-Line Xvls and 28 X-Line Xvlt cabinets were used, with 28 X-Line subs, on the delay towers. "The X-Line systems worked so well," Zieba added. "Despite the various restrictions placed on us by Westminster Council's licensing officials, keeping us to 90dB, the sound at the very furthest point from the stage still exceeded audience expectations. EV's Xvls cabinets do have a longer projection than many other boxes, so I was happier in this instance using X-Line than any other system. It lends itself to that last 50 meter push in a way that other systems don't."

Britannia Row's system also featured 4 Digico digital consoles, two at either end of the multicore. For the first time ever, the BBC accepted digital MADI signals from a third-party supplier. According to Zieba, the collaboration worked brilliantly. Front-of-house duties were eased by the format, originally proposed for the Queen's Jubilee concert, which provided a house band and orchestra to perform with each artist. This made it "reasonably easy" to handle a long and rapidly changing bill, which included Emma Bunton, Jamelia and Rachel Stevens, and artists like Beverly Knight, who brought her own band on stage in addition to the house orchestra. More EV speakers could be found stage-side, where 8 x EV1152s were used for front stage fills.

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For full details on all Midas products, please visit www.midasconsoles.com

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