

THE INTERLAKE STEAMSHIP COMPANY

A Tunnel Radio case study



Tunnel Radio Solves Below-Deck Communications for The Interlake Steamship Company



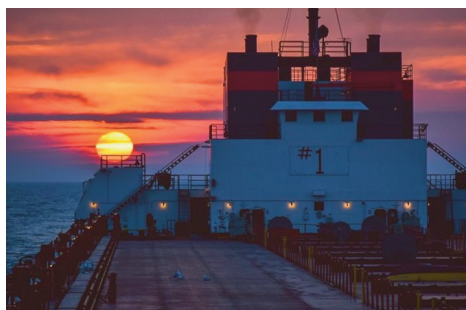
Like most large ships, the M/V Stewart J. Cort was equipped with two-way radios for her crew. Unfortunately, she shared another trait of ships similar in size: RF coverage below-deck—particularly in key areas near the engine room and lower deck tunnels—was near impossible.

To close this critical communication gap, Tunnel Radio of America designed and commissioned a custom application of our Ultracomm® Leaky Feeder System. By allowing radio signals to “leak” from the whole length of the cable, the system enabled constant RF coverage throughout the ship. Not only did this address the lower deck areas themselves, but it enabled critical wireless communication from the pilot house to all lower decks.

The First Thousand-Footer on the Lakes

The Interlake Steamship Company is the largest privately held shipping company on the Great Lakes. Its modern, efficient and diversified fleet includes 10 freighters ranging from 639 to over 1,000 feet, among them the first freighter to be built on the Great Lakes in nearly 40 years, the new 639-foot M/V Mark W. Barker.

M/V Stewart J. Cort was the first 1,000-foot vessel on the Great Lakes when she entered service in 1972. Her bow and stern sections were joined together and called “Stubby” for the trip to the Great Lakes. In Erie, Pennsylvania, “Stubby” was cut apart and joined with her midbody section. The Cort is the only 1,000-footer with pilot house forward. All crew accommodations are also forward. Her self-unloading systems shuttle boom is contained within the after-cabin structure.



The #1 painted on her aft house is a nod to her legacy as the first thousand-footer on the Lakes. She has a regular route carrying iron ore between Superior, Wisconsin and Burns Harbor, Indiana.

"We Couldn't Be Happier"

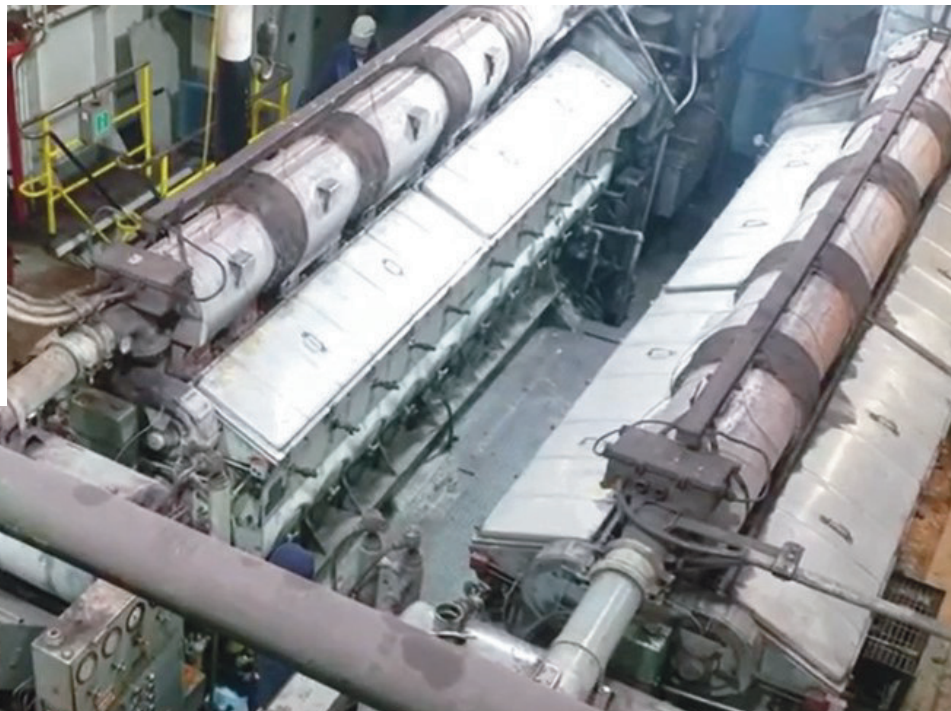
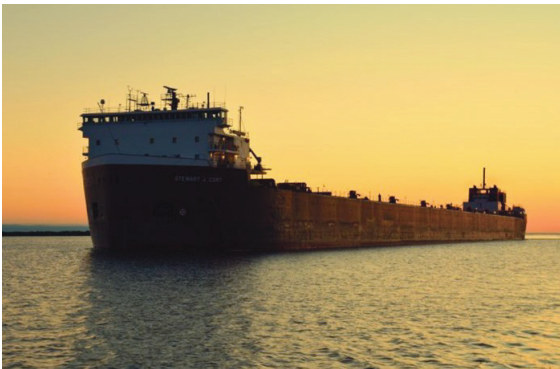
With the Ultracomm radio system in place, the Cort's crew finally had a reliable way to get in touch with anyone, from anywhere in the ship—something they had sorely needed.

"Communication is paramount for the job we perform on the Great Lakes. When there is an issue with reception, it can quickly become a safety issue," said Paul Howald, Fleet Navigation Electronics Technician for Interlake. "The difference in reception throughout the M/V Stewart J Cort has been night and day. We couldn't be happier with the solution Tunnel Radio provided."

Tunnel Radio of America has a 35-year history of leadership in the specialized field of confined space communication. With a long list of customers in freight rail, mining and government infrastructure, including our nation's dams, water purification and national defense sites, we were eager to produce results for The Interlake Steamship Company, and we look forward to being there for them in the future.

"Tunnel Radio has made such an improvement to communications on the Cort," added Paul. "I can't wait to get the rest of our fleet equipped with their systems."

By allowing radio signals to radiate from the whole length of the cable, the system enables constant RF coverage throughout the ship. Not only does this address the lower deck areas themselves, but it enables critical wireless communication from the pilot house to all lower decks.



Engine Room on the M/V Stewart J. Cort