



# AQUA COMMS LAUNCHES AEC-2

AQUA COMMS' CCO, CHRIS BAYLY SPEAKS TO CAPACITY FOLLOWING THE LAUNCH OF AEC-2 AND WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2021



Chris Bayly, CCO at Aqua Comms

**Q. The last time we spoke, Aqua Comms was hard at work on 3 new subsea cables: AEC-2, CC-2 and NSC. What news can you share on these 3 new cables?**

We're delighted to share that AEC-2 went live in November 2020 and was marked by a live event at NJFX, the Tier-3 colocation and US cable landing station facility for this

new cable in New Jersey. The launch of our 2nd Trans-Atlantic subsea cable system and the first Trans-Atlantic cable to land in Denmark for 20 years really is a landmark moment and huge strategic development for Aqua Comms.

Our new Irish Sea cable (CC-2) and North Sea Connect cable (NSC) are expected to go live early in 2021. CC-2 will perfectly complement Aqua Comms' existing CC-1 cable offering two secure and diverse routes from Ireland to the UK. NSC is an exciting new addition to our network portfolio offering a new route across the North Sea connecting the UK and Denmark, with onward connectivity to Copenhagen and the Nordics. Both cables offer services to markets boasting huge data centre growth offering the latest technology and critical route diversity to support this.

**Q. Now operational, what will AEC-2 deliver for customers in the region?**

AEC-2 connects North America from New Jersey, meaning it bypasses New York City, with a direct link to Denmark. This means it is fully diverse from traditional landing points in the United Kingdom and will double capacity between the USA and The Nordics. The diversity and redundancy AEC-2 provides together with our existing AEC-1 system, supports the major data centre and traffic hubs across the US and Europe. AEC-2 offers a highly competitive and diverse route supporting key data centre locations including Ashburn, VA and 165 Halsey, NJ in the US to Copenhagen and the Nordics as well as key hubs of Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Hamburg, all of which are seeing significant growth from the content, cloud and carrier businesses. AEC-2 will deliver 10G, 100G and 400G wavelength options leveraging the very latest technology.

**Q. In addition to the new cable systems that Aqua Comms is delivering, it has expanded its product suite in 2020 offering Professional Services. What was the driver behind this decision?**

There is continuing growth in demand for new subsea cable systems in every market to support global digital infrastructure requirements. Over recent years, we have seen that the investment model for new systems has evolved to be led by the global content players as well as other non-traditional investors, looking to attract the much-needed connectivity to drive growth for their core businesses. This has meant that there is a related demand for specialists to Design, Deploy, Deliver these new systems on behalf of these investors.

Further, for the majority of operators (historically the traditional cable system investors), their focus has moved more to the services layer and less on infrastructure. These companies typically have a product stack of multiple voice and data services, with huge investment currently needed in 5G, IOT, SD-WAN etc. By outsourcing the infrastructure layer to an organisation like Aqua Comms their subsea requirements can be delivered securely and timely, and with no market conflict. This allows the operators to focus where they need to and benefit from the operational and financial efficiencies we can deliver.

**Q. What types of products or services will be on offer in this new Professional Services unit?**

The services we offer include the design, planning, and build phases of new cable development through to operations and NOC services, service delivery as well as sales and marketing once in service. Underscoring these types of services are a number of procedures that ensure delivery times are met as well as providing the highest levels of customer experience.

**Q. What are the other highlights for 2020 and what are the priorities for Aqua Comms in 2021?**

Other than the exciting launch of AEC-2 this year, we were delighted to be recognised by Silicon Review as one of the Best 50 Workplaces in 2020. To receive such an award in a year so significantly impacted by COVID-19 is testament to the professionalism and dedication of the whole team at Aqua Comms. Our managed outsourced operating model has demonstrated great agility to ensure the network has remained fully operational whilst also deploying a major capacity upgrade in support of huge growth in demand.

As for 2021, this will be another very busy year for Aqua Comms as we launch two new cable systems, CC-2 and NSC, and announce more Professional Services news as well as continuing our plans for AEC-3 which we expect to be launched in the first half of 2022. ☺