

TANDBERG CUSTOMER PROFILE

Northern Ireland

Prison
Service



TANDBERG video systems help the Northern Irish courts and prisons function smoothly

- **CLIENT:** The far-flung criminal justice system of the UK province of Northern Ireland, including the police, prosecutors, courts, prison service, probation board and related agencies
- **ACTION:** Installed 132 TANDBERG video communication systems, including the TANDBERG 6000, 2500, 1000 and 800 models
- **RESULT:** More efficient cooperation between law enforcement and the judiciary; reduced cost, stress and danger of escape associated with inmate attendance at hearings

“ It's been a win all around. Everyone's time is better spent. ”

GLYNIS DOWLING
NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SERVICE

VIDEO JUSTICE

Lady Justice herself may wear a blindfold. But in a courtroom, justice depends on everyone seeing and hearing one another clearly.

That used to mean jailed defendants had to be transported under police guard to court for even simple procedures. To everyone's relief, it no longer does. The prisons, courts, police and related agencies in Northern Ireland, for example, are all linked by TANDBERG video communication systems -- 132 at last count.

Using these simple, reliable systems, 200 inmates a week attend bail applications, remand hearings and other procedures without leaving the correctional facility where they live. Officials throughout the criminal justice system rely on the same TANDBERG network, which they call Video Link, to streamline administrative business.

"We have a real story to tell about joined-up justice in Northern Ireland," says Glynis Dowling, Head of Central Services for the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the driving force behind video connectivity across the entire criminal justice system.

A WIDE NET

Ms. Dowling has seen Video Link evolve from a courtroom experiment to an integral part of the criminal justice infrastructure. Using a wide range of TANDBERG models, it links two dozen courthouses, three correctional facilities, 17 police stations, the Youth Justice Agency, the Department of Public Prosecutions, the Crown Solicitor's Office, the Probation Board, the Legal Services Commission, the Police Ombudsman's Office and the Assets Recovery Agency.

"The agencies now talk to each other about all manner of things using Video Link," says Ms. Dowling. "But it's the courtroom systems that have got the most attention and been the most efficient."

COURTROOM DRAMA

In the late 1990s, she recalls, the transport of detainees and prison inmates to court cost taxpayers nearly £10 million a year. Most trips were for routine procedures that took only a few minutes in front of a judge or magistrate but required each inmate to endure a whole day of jostling and waiting. Some of the time was spent in handcuffs or locked in a police van with up to 13 other inmates.

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When Ms. Dowling first mooted the idea of using video to link the province's correctional facilities with the magistrate-level courts and the Belfast High Court, many judges and solicitors were skeptical. But she says a pilot program quickly convinced "everyone from the Lord Chief Justice on down" that video hearings were both fair and efficient. Youthful offenders -- many of whom had found it scary to be brought before the court in person -- were major beneficiaries. But in an independent review, even adult inmates said they preferred appearing in court remotely.

"That was a surprise for us," says Ms. Dowling. "We thought they would miss the change of routine that a day in court represented, but that was not the case. They prefer staying in their own facility, where they can have family visits and take part in sports and the other activities available to them."

CHEAPER, SAFER, LESS STRESSFUL

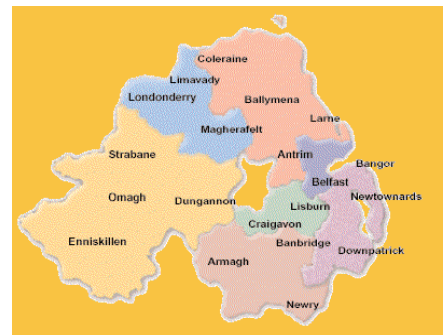
Video Link has been a boon to UK taxpayers. The prison transport bill and related costs have fallen dramatically. Police officers have been transferred from escort duty to crime fighting. And in court, the throughput of cases has been sped up. The TANDBERG network now carries around 50 percent of all pre-trial hearings, including almost all bail and remand hearings. In addition, between 130 and 210 legal and other consultations take place weekly by Video Link.

In court, the clerk controls the video system, using preset programs to change the camera view as appropriate.

"The defendant's solicitor is present in court," says Ms. Dowling, "and if he wants to talk to his client in private there is a dedicated soundproof booth available to meet confidentiality needs. It's been a win all around. Everyone's time is better spent."

Brendan Garland, the Chief Executive of the General Council of the Bar of Northern Ireland, adds:

"Videoconferencing has had a very positive reception at the Bar. Feedback from barristers is that it has been of significant assistance in their work at the courts."



Court locations around Northern Ireland

"CHANGING MINDSETS"

TANDBERG systems installed elsewhere in the criminal justice sector have been similarly received, living up to their reputation for reliability and ease of use. According to Ms. Dowling, TANDBERG has shown itself to be "in the forefront with its videoconferencing technology."

Northern Ireland's widely dispersed police now communicate daily by video. Probation Board members communicate with prisoners and prison staff, prosecutors with social workers and the Prison Service's director general with prison governors.

"Video Link didn't take long to start changing mindsets," says Ms. Dowling, who was recently honored as a "Pioneer to the Life of the Nation" by Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. "Using it is now perceived as the norm."

ABOUT TANDBERG

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services. The Company has dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops and markets systems and software for video, voice and data. The Company provides sales, support and value-added services in more than 90 countries worldwide. TANDBERG trades publicly on the Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TAA.OL. Please visit www.tandberg.net for more information.

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