

Icom Press Release

27th June 2005

Crystal Radio Systems Ltd Secure Homebase Contract

Icom (UK) Ltd dealer, Crystal Radio Systems Ltd has won a prestigious contract to supply the DIY retailer Homebase with over 2,000 IC-F22SR licence free PMR446 transceivers. The equipment is being used to improve communication between cashiers, staff on the sales floor and staff on the information desk. The radios allow staff to deal with issues such as price checks and stock availability in the store or warehouse. They also provide a fast method of alerting staff to health and safety or security issues.

Gary Clarke, Managing Director of Crystal Radio Systems Ltd said, 'The radios were introduced to Homebase stores between November 2004 and January 2005. We fitted out 105 stores, in five regions, before Christmas. The remaining stores were equipped after Christmas, the rollout was completed by the end of Jan 2005. Seven IC-F22SR's have been issued to each store. 67 stores that we identified as high risk had an additional IC-F22SR supplied.'



Gary added, 'When we initially spoke with Homebase regarding their radio communication requirements, they were already leaning towards PMR446 type radios. We recommended that they should consider a top tier PMR446 radio such as the Icom IC-F22SR, as we have found it offers excellent reliability over the years. We have supplied thousands of IC-F22SR's since they were launched and we have very rarely seen any of these units back. They are very easy to configure / reprogram should the need arise e.g. in the event of co- channel interference, and the F22SR can also be programmed with DCS.'

He added, 'We wanted to achieve compatibility throughout the stores in the UK and give them the benefit of using multiple channels. None of the stores require the use of a base station and the lower cost of the PMR446 radios was an obvious attraction.'



Denis Collen, Retail Projects Manager at Homebase said, 'We initially tested the principle of using simple and cheap radios with a trial of 16 stores a year ago. Staff feedback told us that we had to search for a more practical and robust solution that would have no maintenance issues. The Icom unit was tested in store over the peak period to ensure that it met these criteria. Staff feedback indicated that it did.'

It is not just the front line staff who have been issued with the Icom transceivers. As with most stores in a retail environment the security guard has been included. Denis Collen, said, 'In many stores the security guard is issued with a radio. This is linked to the staff on the floor to highlight any customers that they may suspect are up to no good. He/she is able to alert staff without alerting the suspect and in many cases they are able to deal with the incident discreetly!'

As to the success of the system Denis said, 'Customers can see we are taking service seriously when queries are dealt with in no time at all. Security, efficiency, and customer service, which are very important in such a competitive industry, have all been improved since the addition of these two-way radios within the stores. They are great for us and great for customers, popular with staff, very efficient and absolutely fantastic.'



On winning this contract, Gary Clarke, Managing Director of Crystal Radio Systems Ltd said, 'We were absolutely delighted. Crystal has many blue chip customers but it is unusual within our industry to gain an order of such magnitude. We have dedicated staff dealing with Homebase and we have found that the close liaison has developed a strong working relationship between both companies.'

Bob Stockley, Sales & Marketing Director for Icom (UK) Ltd said, 'We are absolutely delighted that 'Homebase' chose Icom. With so many multi location delivery's required in such a short

period of time the logistics of this project where to say the least, very challenging. Gary and the team at Crystal Radio did a fantastic job. Working with them ensured a fast and seamless roll out, delivery and user training program.'

-END-

About Crystal Radio Systems Ltd (www.twoway-radio.co.uk)

Crystal Radio Systems Ltd was formed by Gary Clarke (MD) in 1999. Crystal has gone on to become one of the largest suppliers of two way radios in the United Kingdom.

For more information, please contact:

Gary Clarke, Managing Director, sales@twoway-radio.co.uk

About Homebase (www.homebase.co.uk)

Homebase is the second largest DIY brand in the UK offering approximately 40,000 DIY, home and gardening lifestyle products. Founded in 1979, today the Company has nearly 300 stores throughout the UK and The Republic of Ireland with an exciting programme of store openings. Homebase employ over 17,000 staff in the UK serving over 1.5 million customers a week - an average of 78 million a year.

For more information, please contact:

Media Relations, Media.Relations@homebase.co.uk

Corporate background (www.icomuk.co.uk)

Icom (UK) Ltd was established in 1974 and is the sole UK and Republic of Ireland importer and distributor for Icom Inc., of Osaka, Japan. Based in Herne Bay, Kent, the company is privately owned with 42 staff.

A comprehensive portfolio of radio transceiver, receiver, navigation and computer products is maintained to suit the consumer, commercial, radio-amateur, marine and aviation markets. Equipment is available in fixed-base, vehicle-mobile and handheld formats to suit a wide range of specifications and applications.

For more information, please contact:

Ian Lockyer, Marketing Manager, ian@icomuk.co.uk

Annabel Clarke, Marketing Assistant, annabelc@icomuk.co.uk

For images, transparencies and other graphic items please contact:

Roger Diamond, Creative Manager, roger@icomuk.co.uk