



MILITARY

DATAPATH

Case Study

UNDER FIRE IN SADR CITY, IRAQ: U.S. ARMY COMMUNICATIONS ARE RESTORED QUICKLY WITH IN-THEATER SUPPORT FROM DATAPATH

DataPath Team Works Side-by-Side with U.S. Army to Repair Battle-Damaged Frontline Communications

Since 2003, Sadr City has been one of the most dangerous districts in Baghdad, plagued with violence and crime. Unemployment is high, homes are in disrepair and the area has become home to many criminals released from Iraqi prisons before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. U.S. forces arrived in the district in June 2003 to help control the violence.

Every day, U.S. warfighters on patrol in Iraq rely on their communications networks to keep in close contact with both operations headquarters and other soldiers in the area, as well as to obtain up-to-the-minute data and intelligence. To support its troops, the U.S. Army developed the Joint Network Node (JNN) program to bring dependable, high-bandwidth communications closer to the front line.

On-the-Ground Support When and Where the U.S. Military Needs It

DataPath, one of the prime contractors for the JNN program, has delivered more than 800 SATCOM Transportable Terminals (STT), enabling beyond line-of-sight communications that help to improve the safety and effectiveness of troops. These trailer-mounted terminals are towed behind a Humvee or other vehicle. They are a key part of the JNN, which also includes fixed, transportable and mobile satellite terminals built and supported by DataPath.

At a Glance:

Rapid Response Communications Support

Challenge:

Incoming mortar fire at a U.S. Army base causes extensive damage to one of the nodes within the communications network, resulting in loss of connectivity with headquarters and soldiers on the front line.

Solution:

DataPath's field support team thinks and acts fast, using ingenuity and all available resources to repair the network with minimal downtime.

Impact:

DataPath's team of highly skilled technicians, working side-by-side with the U.S. Army, restores communications to support warfighter safety and the military's mission.

DataPath. A Reliable Partner

As a strategic partner committed to supporting the U.S. military, DataPath's Integrated Logistics Services (ILS) provides the services that are essential to installing, operating and maintaining communications networks, even in extreme locations and conditions. In Iraq, more than 75 experienced DataPath field support representatives work alongside the military to ensure the connectivity that is critical to operations. Many of these DataPath experts have military experience in addition to their extensive communications knowledge.

In Sadr City, a DataPath team supports the satellite communications network that keeps the U.S. Army 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (ID) up-and-running and connected with the 1st Cavalry Division. In an area that is constantly under fire, anything can happen, at any time. ILS field support representatives must be ready at a moment's notice to troubleshoot and resolve issues. They must minimize any interruption of communication so the warfighters they serve stay in touch and safely focused on their mission.

Mortar Fire Impacts Communications

In December 2006, incoming mortar fire at a forward base in Sadr City caused multiple instances of damage to one of the nodes supporting the Army's communications network. The DataPath ILS team responded quickly to each incident, exceeding expectations to restore communications.

In one incident, an STT sustained major damage after a mortar landed under one side of the terminal. The blast severely damaged the internal electronics of the terminal, rendering it inoperable. The line-of-sight (LOS) cable that supports the secure network (SIPRNET) for operations was also destroyed. As a result, the 2nd Brigade, 2nd ID headquarters was unable to communicate with soldiers in the field via the satellite-connected network.

DataPath Restores Network in Minutes

Fortunately, a DataPath field support representative was on the scene, and he responded within minutes. Thinking quickly, he was able to modify a Battalion Command Post Node terminal to work as a JNN terminal using components from the damaged STT. Just moments later, another field support representative arrived by helicopter with the LOS cable that was needed. The DataPath team worked rapidly with soldiers to replace the destroyed cabling, including the vital LOS link.



The STT that was severely damaged as the result of a mortar attack.

“DataPath has proven their ability to think on their feet and help us maintain communications that are essential to the success of our mission and the safety of our soldiers.”
- U.S. military G6 representative in Iraq

Secure communications were back up within 15 minutes, and the vital “unclassified but sensitive network” (NIPRNET) and back-up (SIPRNET) were fully restored within three hours. This rapid response helped to keep warfighters in contact with each other and with headquarters, minimizing any compromises to their safety.

“They were able to repair the satellite terminal and bring the network back up very quickly,” said a U.S. military G6 representative in Iraq. “It was an impressive show of resourcefulness. We were back in business in no time.”

Second Hit Destroys Generator; DataPath Responds

Looking In a second incident in December, an STT at the same forward operating base took a direct mortar hit, completely destroying the generator within the STT. Both the NIPRNET and back-up SIPRNET went down, and the base lost key communication capabilities. Once more, DataPath in-theater personnel responded immediately. The technician’s first step was to power up the STT by connecting it to an external generator. Next, a damaged amplifier was replaced, and both networks were operational only three hours after the initial outage.

In yet another example of inventiveness, the DataPath team went on to combine elements of a destroyed STT with an STT that had been damaged during transport, resulting in one fully operational STT and one training terminal.

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DataPath Field Engineers working with soldiers from the U.S. Army’s 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division to repair an STT that was damaged in a direct mortar hit in Iraq.

Mission Impact: Reliable Communications Support Helps Keep Warfighters Safe

Well-trained and highly skilled, DataPath’s field support representatives are committed to helping maintain a dependable communications network that provides the connectivity frontline forces need for everyday operations and overall mission success.

“We are all extremely pleased with the support we’ve received from DataPath,” said the U.S. military G6 representative. “They’ve been able to integrate into our unit very well. DataPath has proven their ability to think on their feet and help us maintain communications that are essential to the success of our mission and the safety of our soldiers.”

About DataPath

DataPath is a global leader in creating satellite-based network solutions that solve our customers' toughest communications challenges. We specialize in enabling complex, high-bandwidth communications networks that are critical to the operations of military, civilian government and commercial organizations. Even in the most urgent time frames and extreme conditions, we establish and maintain communications anywhere and deliver total network control through our communications solutions, MaxView® network management software and comprehensive services. SWE-DISH Satellite Systems AB, a Stockholm-based, global leader in the design and manufacture of mobile satellite communications systems, is a wholly owned subsidiary. DataPath is headquartered in Duluth, Ga., U.S.A. and operates via more than two dozen offices and distributor locations around the world. For more information, visit www.datapath.com.



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