

Digital Ship

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Anti-piracy communications system launched

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Applied Satellite Engineering (ASE) has introduced a new system which aims to allow crews on a vessel under attack by pirates to retreat to a safe area while still maintaining communications links with the shore.

The Citadel safe room solution incorporates Iridium satellite voice services and GPS reporting, and is kept separate from the usual vessel communications system.

ASE suggests that, when a ship is boarded by pirates, the crew withdraw to a designated safe room, or citadel, and power down all systems, leaving pirates with a dark ship and no control.

The ASE phone is installed in the safe room, providing emergency and periodic GPS reports as well as voice calling services. A battery backup system can power the system for 24 hours in a powered standby mode, or for a few days in a periodic mode.

The system includes an outdoor transceiver, cable, lockable cabinet, corded phone and optional battery backup. Additional phones such as a captain's phone or crew calling phone can be installed on the ship from the same system.

The transceiver and antenna are housed in the same enclosure, about the size of an American football, to reduce antenna cabling distance problems. The unit should be mounted hidden from view, with the cable routed internally within the ship.