

Around the events world with **TAO Group**

The past few months has seen the TAO Group team work on some of the UK's most interesting events and taken them to countries as diverse as Libya and Poland. Here's a round-up of some of the company's recent challenges

Earlier this summer, through sister company TAO Fire, TAO Group provided river rescue for the installation of a temporary bridge over the River Thames for the Reading Festival 2009.

Designed and installed by Serious Stages, the bridge was erected to allow visitors to get from north car parks situated on the other side of River Thames, to the festival site. The team from TAO supplied river rescue personnel stationed on Jet Ski's whilst the bridge was moved into position by a 250 tonne crane.

TAO's Chris Harvey said: "Our brief was to provide rapid water rescue for the crews assembling and positioning the structure. Due to the width of the river at that point we needed to station Jet Ski's with water rescue personnel up and down stream of the structure."

Both bridge installation and de-rig went without incident, with the temporary bridge seeing a foot fall of around 50,000 across the event. Andy Cotton, head of TAO Group, said: "We have had more and more enquiries for river rescue provision since we instituted the service for the launch of the BT Round the World Yacht Race in 2008."

Further afield, TAO Productions provided safety & risk consultancy services for the main structure build for the 40th Anniversary of Colonel Gaddafi coming to power in Libya this September.

Serious Stages and Atlantic Enterprises provided a custom structure for the production; the largest temporary stage ever erected in the MENA region. TAO's [redacted] conducted third party assurance of the safety systems put in place on-site, including work programming given the intense heat, work at height compliance, lifting operations and workplace transport.

Back in the UK, TAO Productions provided production management for a series of three concerts at Shepton Mallet Showground, which saw what was to be Stephen Gately of Boyzone's last ever performance. Boyzone performed to a crowd of 5,000, supported by Peter Andre, with subsequent show nights seeing performances by James Morrison and Kathryn Jenkins.

TAO provided technical production management, prepared the event safety management plan and provided medical management through TAO Medical.

Andy Cotton has also recently returned from appearing as an international expert guest speaker for the Polish Event Managers Association. He was first contacted by TESA and then asked by the head of the Polish trade

Andy Cotton

association to give the lectures, the first of which were on 'Events as part of the corporate strategy' - i.e. the use of innovative events as an integral part of a company's internal and external marketing strategy.

Andy utilised a variety of case studies from TAO's portfolio of corporate work, including the world media launch of 3's X-Series Mobile Phone Service in association with Skype, Google & Microsoft; the world-wide launch of the BT Open 60 Round the World Yacht, and the production of Motorola's 3GSM, to illustrate the massive benefits to business of utilising a varied and innovative events program.

He also led a workshop on delivering the 'dream event' - passing on expertise in the delivery of logistically complex events which have the potential to yield massive quantifiable and unquantifiable benefits.

A follow up training course is to be delivered in Poland, dates to be confirmed.

