

Local radio-technology firm lands \$6.5M U.S. government contract

BY DARRON KLOSTER, TIMES COLONIST FEBRUARY 18, 2010

Daniels Electronics started its 60th year in style yesterday by announcing the largest contract in company history.

It's a \$6.5-million deal with an undisclosed government agency in the United States for digital radio repeaters and means continued black ink on Daniels' bottom line and additional hiring to fill the order at the company's manufacturing plant in James Bay.

The privately held company, which sells radio technology hardware worldwide, rode out the recession with "steady revenues" of about \$17 million last year -- almost all of it from sales within North America, said chief executive Robert Small.

"It's a tremendous boost on top of our regular business and the entire company will be busy for the next few months as we fulfill this order," said Small. "It demonstrates that Daniels' products are world class and shows that as a mid-size Canadian company, we have the right people for continued success in the growing international market of public safety and digital radio communications."

Daniels currently employs 63 full-time workers and a \$4-million annual payroll. As many as eight contract workers will be hired for the latest order. He said work is already underway on the repeater hardware designed to support radio communications for road construction. Deliveries will start in March and continue through to July, said Small.

Daniels did not receive permission to release the name of its client, but Small said it is a state agency and a repeat customer that supports road repair work. The deal was won in a competitive bid process.

The historic deal comes at a time when Daniels marks its humble beginnings in hand-built AM radio-telephones leased to British Columbia's commercial fishing fleet.

The company was actually founded in Prince Rupert in 1938 by Gordon Daniels, but was put on hold by the Second World War. It was officially incorporated on Dec. 9, 1950, and moved to Victoria five years later.

Gordon Daniels died in 1962 and his sons Terry and Ron established a manufacturing and retail operation in two older buildings near the company's current location in James Bay.

Terry Daniels remains chairman of the board and Ron Daniels is a board member.


The brothers dodged a downturn in the fishing industry in 1980 by diversifying its product line and winning a contract mountain-top radio repeater system for the B.C. Department of Highways.

The company continues to produce repeaters and base stations for the worldwide market -- although the products have evolved through seven technology generations and now incorporate the latest software-defined radio technology.


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