



Officially proclaimed the second best historical tourist attraction in the United Kingdom and a National Treasure, Admiral Lord Nelson's Flagship from the battle of Trafalgar, HMS Victory, attracts over 400,000 visitors a year.

Built in 1765, she is the oldest commissioned warship in the world, still manned by Officers and Ratings of the Royal Navy and is the only surviving warship that fought in the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars. Now the flagship of the Second Sea Lord and Commander in Chief Naval Home Command, she lies in No 2 Dry Dock at Portsmouth Naval Base in Hampshire UK, where she has a permanent berth.

The low decks and narrow companionways add to the atmosphere and to the visitor's experience of life on board but makes for unhurried progress around the ship so the number of visitors at any one time is restricted.

The safety of visitors and crew is paramount on board and it was decided to install a ship wide public address system so that the orderly evacuation of the ship could be carried out in an emergency.

Sound Advice Ltd in Fareham had previously installed a site wide PA system for HM Dockyard, Portsmouth, and having seen the quality of the installations, (some of which were in buildings restored in 1792) BVT Surface Fleet Support engaged the same team to design and install the system on Victory.

The ship is now covered by seven zones of Public Address, one per deck, including the top deck outside and the immediate dry dock area.



Loudspeaker Zones



The 3,000 metres of cabling between loudspeakers was laid using fireproof cable which is screwed and clipped every 235mm to the woodwork, using nearly 13,000 brass woodscrews.

Several different loudspeakers were offered and demonstrated but the client almost immediately chose the JBL Control 23's due to their weatherproofing and audio qualities.

None of the surfaces where the loudspeakers are located are level or smooth so the multi angle brackets on the loudspeakers ensured that the tip and tilt of the loudspeaker fitted its surrounding exactly.

The gun deck is used for corporate and official Navy events and the PA now provides a radio microphone for presentations and speeches, supplemented by a plug in point for background music.



A TOA VX-2000 series integrated Voice Evacuation System provides all of the zoning and amplification with a battery backup giving over a half hour output at full power ensuring full compliance with EN60849 / IEC60849 standards. The Master paging microphone is located in the Quarter-masters Office with the main equipment racks are housed in what was the steam cabinet.

Sound Advice's Project Manager Jon McGuigan said "it was fascinating working on such an historic project, visiting cubby holes and areas that the public never see and using traditional fixing and installation methods. The only down side was that all of the work had to be done over three weeks, out of hours at night after the public had left. On several occasions there were loud creaks and groans from the hull as it settled for the night which made every one jump!"

George Lawrence MBE, the Project Manager from BVT Surface Fleet on behalf of the Navy commented "As high profile installations go, you cant get more prominent than HMS Victory and using the team from Sound Advice who are so experienced in working in Listed Buildings and English Heritage sites, we were guaranteed a first class job, completed on time and on budget. We are delighted with the finished result".