



JOE BIDEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND 2023

Location: Belfast, Northern Ireland
Sector: Events

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In April 2023, US President Joe Biden made a four-day trip to Ireland, timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement which brought an end to 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland. The trip also marked a personal milestone, as Joe Biden has Irish ancestry and it was the first time he had returned to Ireland since becoming President of the United States.

As part of his trip, Joe Biden made a key address at Ulster University, visiting the university's new Belfast campus to perform the official opening. The visit was the only official public engagement in Northern Ireland of the President's trip and prior to his speech at the university, Joe Biden met up with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

The new campus brings 16,000 students and staff from across Northern Ireland and around the world. In his speech Joe Biden said 'the new campus stands as a beacon for aspiration, as an engine of innovation and as a symbol of what has been achieved'.

▲ Sunbelt Rentals facilitated a huge install in an incredibly short timeframe. This was delivered with great professionalism, care, and design, which resulted in a flawless production. ▲

Nick Hutchinson,
Company Director, BNL Productions

THE CHALLENGE:

This was a high profile event with ultra tight security measures and stringent deadlines. Sunbelt Rentals were contacted on 5th April 2023 - just a week before Joe Biden's visit to Ulster University on 12th April - and attended a meeting the following day at the university to discuss the power requirements for the visit.

We met on-site with BNL Productions and the Whitehouse Communications Agency on 6th April and confirmed quotes and specifications that same afternoon. The proposal was approved at 4pm that day and the installation began at 8am on 7th April, which was Good Friday and an official bank holiday.

This meant that a complete array of equipment needed to be prepared and installed rapidly by the Sunbelt Rentals team over the Easter period. As this event was so high profile with the eyes of the world watching, it was absolutely critical that the power solution we provided was totally reliable. There could be absolutely no room for error.

▲ We're absolutely honoured that Sunbelt Rentals was chosen to provide equipment for such a high profile visit. It's not every day that our equipment is used for a visit by one of the world's most famous people!

The expectations were high and there were many last minute changes and very tight deadlines to meet over the Easter period, but the Sunbelt Rentals team pulled together to deliver a reliable power solution. ▲

Paul Tumilty, Managing Director - Ireland, Sunbelt Rentals

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THE SOLUTION:

Our Sunbelt Rentals depot in Belfast was well placed to provide a complete power solution for this historic event. We supplied 3 x 200kVA synchronised generators in order to power the PA system, the lighting and the media platform with 100 cameras. A battery back-up power supply was provided for the microphones that Joe Biden and other key speakers were using for the speeches.

The speeches were delivered in a large area with mezzanine floors four storeys high, where hundreds of people were listening to the speeches. The full installation of cabling and distribution boards was carried out across all four storeys.

We provided an extensive engineering team to install, commission, manage and derig the power supply, and also provided fuel management as part of the solution. Just three hours after the US President had left the venue, we had derigged and collected all equipment supplied.

THE RESULTS:

There was an uninterrupted power supply throughout the presidential visit which was deemed to be a huge success.

