



Warning and Informing at the Local Level

+44 (0) 207 1121 999

Since the introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act some four years ago the pressure has been building on Emergency Managers to develop strategies and implement communication procedures to warn and inform businesses, sites of importance and residents at the local level.

The UK has been faced with a wide variety of major emergencies ranging from severe flooding in Carlisle and the terrorist attacks in London to mini tornado in Birmingham and the Buncefield Oil Depot fire and more recently during February 2009's severe snow storms. They have all highlighted the need to ensure that not only are our communities educated about the risks they face but more importantly the actions that they should take in the event of an emergency.

Informer Emergency Notification Service (Informer ENS) can be used to develop a communications strategy for organisations who, under the Civil Contingencies Act, must raise public awareness and to warn and inform the public prior to, during and following an emergency.

Informer ENS Warn & Inform can be used to notify communities in real time about the risks they face and the actions to take in the event of an emergency, and provide up to the minute information during and after an incident.

Using a range of inbound and outbound communications media, real-time information can be provided to anyone with an internet connection, landline or mobile telephone.

Personalised Information

Because Informer ENS supports multiple communication methods it addresses several key challenges and can:

- ➔ Reach as many people as possible rapidly and at an affordable cost
- ➔ Provide personalised information
- ➔ Provide information centrally and consistently to avoid confusion
- ➔ Enable communities to help themselves

By using the latest Geographical Information System (GIS) technology every member of the public receives information that is relevant to their location. Informer ENS delivers that information through their preferred communication device:

- ➔ Email and the Web
- ➔ SMS text messaging
- ➔ Voice via landline or mobile phone

Informer ENS enables proactive control of public communication before, during and after an incident. Informer ENS can be used to:

- ➔ Educate communities about potential risks and what to do in an emergency
- ➔ Provide specific, quick time information to warn, inform and direct people during an incident
- ➔ Provide updates and reassurance after an incident

Key Benefits

- ➔ Quick and easy automation of manual notification procedures
- ➔ Use of existing communications media for message delivery
- ➔ Personnel free to focus on situation at hand versus placing/taking calls
- ➔ GIS Integration for map-driven notification of specific geographic areas at risk
- ➔ Reduced risk of human error and manual call-tree breakdown
- ➔ Widespread notification within minutes instead of hours
- ➔ Immediate answers to important questions, such as message receipt
- ➔ Comprehensive reports for full audit trail
- ➔ 24/7 readiness for any emergency or routine notification needs

Personalised Information

- ➔ Reach as many people as possible rapidly at an affordable cost
- ➔ Provide personal information
- ➔ Provide information centrally
- ➔ Enable communities to help themselves
- ➔ Preferred communications device
- ➔ Email and the Web
- ➔ SMS text messaging
- ➔ Voice via landline or mobile phone

“Communications to the local community are important to give adequate assurance that the site is well run and emergency preparations are realistic and reliable.”

The Buncefield Investigation Board
July 2007

Two-Way Communication

Informer ENS combines inbound and outbound communication with the public:

- ➔ Outbound, proactively make contact with the public through a range of communication methods.
- ➔ Inbound, reactively receive contact from the public by web, SMS or telephone.

Supporting the 10 Step Cycle

Informer ENS supports the Civil Contingencies Act '10-Step Cycle' best practice guidance from the National Steering Committee for Warning & Informing the Public (NSCWIP):

- ➔ Provides high volume, fast reliable messaging that can be tailored to suit any plan or incident.
- ➔ Provides detailed management and audit information that can be reviewed post event.
- ➔ Has the ability to set up geographical mappings in advance according to the local Community Risk Register.
- ➔ Gives the opportunity to devolve system operation responsibility down to Emergency Planning Officers and/or Safety Managers.
- ➔ Flexible enough to be used for day-to-day advice and guidance as well as rehearsals and real incidents; all the while building up public awareness and coverage.

Local Web Registration Page

An inbound communication channel can be configured locally as a customised/branded web registration page if required, which acts as a single website, enabling members of the public to register their full contact details including postcode and preferred communication method(s).

The key issue is that members of the public receive information that is relevant in their local area.

Security and Resilience

The Informer ENS Service Delivery Platform is managed in line with ISO27001 information security best practice by a team of NPPV security cleared professionals.

Informer ENS is also registered with the UK Information Commissioners Office and public information is held securely and in strict compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

On-Demand Scalability

With a capacity in excess of 2,000 fully automated telephone (IVR) ports, Informer ENS Warn & Inform can cater for peaks in demand during an incident.

Capacity is managed 'on-demand', meaning that you only pay for what you use, when you need it, saving significant ongoing costs for infrastructure and IT systems management.

Auditing and Reporting

Informer ENS Portal provides detailed reports that show system usage and enable key indicators to be measured:

- ➔ Number of inbound information requests received from the public by each communication method.
- ➔ Number of 'in area' and 'out of area' requests.
- ➔ Number of people who have elected to receive notification messages by email, SMS or telephone.
- ➔ Detailed timeline of system usage during each incident.
- ➔ Management information can be provided by geographical area, to give a detailed local view of service usage and preparedness for future incidents.



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One



Thousands