

Minnesota's On-Line Fire Incident Reporting System



Vision 20/20

MODEL PERFORMANCE IN

FIRE PREVENTION

SYMPOSIUM

Session Presenter



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Acronyms / Abbreviations

- FD – Fire Department.
- MFIRS – Minnesota Fire Incident Reporting System.
- NFIRS – National Fire Incident Reporting System.
- SFMD – State Fire Marshal Division.
- USFA – United States Fire Administration.

Introduction / Overview

- On 1/1/2009, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) discontinued the “old” NFIRS 4.1 system:
 - Basically, the “paper” reporting system went away.
 - After 1/1/2009 all fire reports were required to meet NFIRS 5.0 format and be submitted electronically.

Introduction / Overview

- Minnesota has enjoyed a well developed fire reporting system with very active participation by the state's fire departments.
 - In 2007, 746 of 789 FDs provided reports to the SFMD (95% reporting).
 - In 2008, 741 of 789 FDs provided reports to the SFMD (94% reporting).

Introduction / Overview

- In 2007, 412 of Minnesota's 789 FDs provided reports to SFMD electronically:
 - 377 FDs still report via “paper” reports.
 - That represents 48% of the state's FDs.
- The SFMD recognized a need to have a reporting system for these FDs.
 - Tended to be smaller FDs (run volume).
 - Most did not have \$\$ to purchase software.

Formative Evaluation

- SFMD looked at options:
 - Purchasing computers and software for all FDs that didn't have electronic reporting.
 - USFA Fire Prevention & Safety Grants.
 - Mandating local FDs to purchase equipment.
 - Hiring staff to input into NFIRS 4.1 and convert to NFIRS 5.0 format.
 - Developing an on-line reporting system.

Formative Evaluation

- The State of Minnesota published a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an on-line fire reporting system in July, 2008.
- Two (2) vendors submitted responses to the RFP.
- The vendors provided demonstrations to a technical review panel (fire service personnel).

Formative Evaluation

- There were two parts of the RFP:
 - Basic system (NFIRS and backbone to run the base system),
 - Optional modules:
 - Pre-fire planning,
 - Inspections,
 - Investigations,
 - Personnel payroll, etc.

Formative Evaluation

- In September, 2008 a state contract was awarded to a vendor named ImageTrend.
- The SFMD was able to purchase the entire system (basic and all optional modules).
- Training of local FDs occurred in late-2008.

Program Description

- Features (modules) Included:
 - **On-Line fire reporting system,**
 - **FD Personnel / Payroll module,**
 - **FD Equipment / Inventory module,**
 - **Pre-fire Planning module,**
 - **Inspection module,**
 - **Investigation module.**

Program Description – Advantages

- No software to purchase or upgrade.
- Does not need a stand-alone or dedicated computer:
 - Can operate from any computer with an internet connection.
- “Real-time” data reporting.
- No special data transfer process to SFMD.
- Compatible with MNSTAR (EMS Reports).

Program Description – Improvements

- The State Fire Marshal Division has convened some technical advisory groups (i.e. “user-groups”) to provide suggestions for modifications to the system.
- The investigation module is under development.
- A mapping module is under development.

Program Impact

- In 2009, 526 of Minnesota's 785 fire departments (67%) entered their fire incident reports into this on-line system:
 - This far exceeded the initial goal of developing a reporting system for 377 fire departments.
- Overall reporting for 2009 was also up:
 - 759 of the 785 FDs reported (97%).

Program Impact

- Saved local fire departments time and money:
 - About \$30,000 in software costs the first year.
 - Less staff time to download and export reports to the SFMD.
 - No dedicated or stand-alone computers to run the system.

Program Impact

- Some FDs are tying this system in with their computer-aided dispatch (CAD) which populates much of the data.
- Pre-fire planning information is accessible while responding or while on scene (with air cards or mobile data terminals).
- Incident reports can be completed at the scene (less time).

Outcomes

- Near “real-time” reporting of fire incidents.
- Access to apparatus and equipment resources for fire department mutual aid needs on a local, regional, and statewide level.
- Ability to track fire incident trends on a more timely basis.

Outcomes

- High quality output reports (some “canned” reports and an ad-hoc report writer).
- Ability to access the system from remote locations.
- Ability to track sprinkler successes on a statewide basis.
- Saves fire department software costs.

Conclusions

- The on-line fire reporting system has been very successful.
- The number of FDs using the system exceeded expectations.
- The total number of FDs reporting went up in the first year of the on-line system.
- Future enhancements will make it even more attractive.

Questions

