Mobile Device Training for Emergency Responders

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Goals

Provide training for county Emergency Management Agencies on the use of mobile computing devices to be used during the response to Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) incidents.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mobile computing devices, Palm Pilots and similar, give emergency responders the ability to access hazardous chemical databases during an emergency response or HAZMAT incident. This is especially important given the large variety of materials moving on the roadways of Mississippi. Having adequately trained emergency responders is very important, but having tools on hand for these responders is also very important to reduce the possibility of incorrectly identifying a hazardous material.

The Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO) is a system of software applications that can be used to plan for and respond to chemical emergencies. The CAMEO system integrates a chemical database and a method to manage the data, an air dispersion model, and a mapping capability. However, CAMEO does not operate on a mobile computing device.
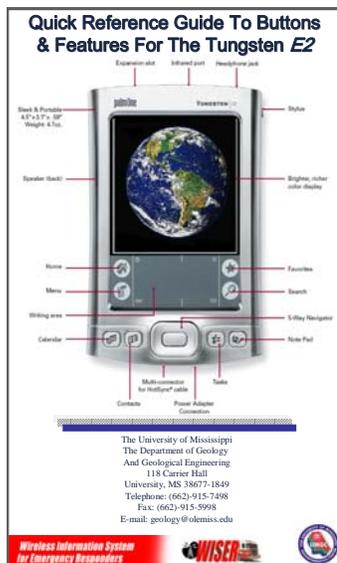

Figure 1.   User guide for Tungsten E2 mobile device.

The Wireless Information System for Emergency Responders (WISER) is a mobile computing system designed to assist first responders. WISER provides a wide range of information on hazardous substances, including substance identification support, physical characteristics, human health information, and containment and suppression guidance. The WISER system does operate on mobile computing devices and is currently being used by the emergency management agency (EMA) in Lafayette County.

CONCLUSIONS

Two training sessions were conducted for state and county emergency responders, one at the state emergency operations center (EOC) and the other at the University of Mississippi Geoinformatics Center (UMGC) lab. The training provided emergency response personnel with the skills needed to configure and operate the mobile computing devices as an emergency response tool. The WISER system was the focus of the training for response, however a brief overview of the relationship between WISER and CAMEO was also given.

IMPACTS

The project has succeeded in training approximately 40 MEMA state and county officials in the use of mobile devices in emergency response situations using the WISER software for a HAZMAT incident. The training provided the necessary knowledge to troubleshoot any problems with the mobile devices and the software. All-weather pocket manuals were created and distributed to all of the attendees of the training classes to be used as quick reference guides for troubleshooting the mobile devices or to help in operating the device for new users who quickly need to identify a hazardous material.

Collaborators

Mississippi Emergency Management Agency

Contact Information

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