

At BOC, RapidReach has changed the way the company communicates in any emergency

Three years ago, right at the start of the new millenium, BOC's gases business in the UK decided to take the leap into high-tech communications, by automating its emergency communications. A computerised notification system was favoured, and the final choice was RapidReach from Enera Ltd.

BOC serves markets in the automotive, chemicals, petroleum, electronics and semiconductor fabrication sectors by producing industrial gases such as oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and nitrous oxide. Special gases are also produced such as xenon, krypton, neon, and helium. The gases are transported and distributed to customers by pipelines or by cylinders.

In line with the company's safety policy BOC puts high emphasis on its emergency communications. Legislative requirements for the safe transport of dangerous goods, as detailed in the Control of Major Accidents Hazards regulations, also puts focus on the need to have an effective computerised tool in place for emergency communications.

Before the company computerised the notification processes with RapidReach, a manual, paper based, cascade system with people's names and phone numbers was used.

Three years ago BOC decided to invest in a computerised system. "We investigated the market and took a close look at a couple of different systems" says Steve Marshall, Operations Support Manager at BOC's production plant in Brinsworth, and who was involved in the purchasing process. "RapidReach turned out to be the best system for our needs. We chose it over the other products primarily because we found it simpler



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and easier to set up and to use. Of course cost was also a big factor – RapidReach came with a reasonable price tag."

Steve's responsibilities are within the area of transport operations and safety. The RapidReach system is installed in the control centre of the Brinsworth site. In the event of an incident at the plant it is vital that

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Case Study

key emergency personnel are alerted and mobilised. RapidReach is set up to call out site teams to respond to incidents whether it be a road traffic incident, on a customer's site or on site. RapidReach also calls and notifies central support teams at Brinsworth, as well as the gases head office at Guildford. In an emergency RapidReach will contact about 70 people in various teams by telephone asking them to report to the incident control centre.

According to Steve, RapidReach was easy to install and learn how to operate. Only the two system managers, Steve himself and one other person took part in training on RapidReach. All four found it easy to train those who would be contacted by RapidReach in an emergency on how to respond to the call.

Every six weeks, RapidReach is used for regular drills. Currently, the system is activated via system clients located on the premises. Certain people are also authorised to activate scenarios remotely via telephone. In the future BOC plans to introduce a system whereby RapidReach can be activated through the Internet.



The main benefits of the system are, according to Steve: "It's a very quick way of calling out a number of people. The messages are clear and concise – there is no ambiguity in the system. The speed of response has been greatly improved compared to the previous manual method, which helps us tremendously."

Enera – the developers of RapidReach – are leading suppliers of software tools for automated communications. With head quarters in Gothenburg, Sweden, Enera's products are marketed and supported in a number of countries worldwide, mainly in Europe and the United States. RapidReach is used as an emergency notification tool in communication centers, control rooms, and operation centres in a wide range of industries.



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