

## Learning & Development

by David Arber

# Tracker system for Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

In this article, Redkite Systems' David Arber give details of the company's work with Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

**FOLLOWING A FULL AND THOROUGH** evaluation and analysis of systems suitable to manage their IPDS processes, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service have joined other forward-thinking services and selected Redkite Tracker as their preferred solution. They are the seventh local authority fire and rescue service to select the Redkite Tracker system, and they join Tyne and Wear and Durham and Darlington fire and rescue services who made a similar decision following a long and detailed tendering process earlier this year.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service were the initial local authority to recognise the benefit of the Redkite Tracker system.

With over 50 commercial UK airports using Redkite Tracker, the system is audited by the Civil Aviation Authority on a regular basis as part of its regulatory oversight and audit programme. In the airport sector, and now in the local authority fire sector, Redkite Systems have built a credible, proven track record for supplying robust and reliable systems that meet sector requirements.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service are of special interest to Redkite as they are one of a growing number of customers who make use of both the Redkite Tracker and Redkite Asset Tracker systems.

The latter helps manage an equipment inventory and standard tests and inspections in line with TB1/94, and subsequent expectations document. The purchase of Redkite Tracker will mean that they will have an integrated system sharing common information between the two Redkite products. A common interface will eliminate duplication of personal details and individuals will access both systems using a common user name and password. The next stage will be to integrate the competence required to carry out tests on Asset Tracker with competence records held in Tracker.

This integration will provide valuable management information as it will be possible to interrogate the system to establish what equipment is held on an appliance, whether that equipment has been subjected to mandatory test and inspection and is therefore safe to use, what staff are crewing an appliance and what competence they hold to use the equipment and carry out fire and rescue activities.



### Equipment Management – Redkite EMS Companion

Asset Tracker and the integrated EMS Companion based on the Psion Workabout Pro are now also being rolled out in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services. Within the airport sector, Robin Hood Airport has become the latest RFFS to adopt the EMS Companion. They, like Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, have worked closely with specialist label suppliers Ritchey plc to identify, test and develop a range of labels suitable for marking fire service equipment. Shrink wrap barcode labels have proved particularly successful for marking hoses of various sizes. The interest in the EMS Companion has led Redkite to develop new interfaces that will allow users to access the application directly over the Internet via wireless or dial up technology.

### Question Master

Although a recent addition to the Redkite family of products, Question Master has proved very popular and it sits alongside and wholly integrates with Redkite Tracker. It allows users to create a question bank of multiple choice questions based on any topic. Questions can be drawn from the question bank at random or in groups to form assessment questionnaires which can be delivered to workforces via the internet or intranet. On completion of a questionnaire the outcome can be mapped directly to an individual's personal development record where it can be seen as a knowledge input. A record of all questions asked and responses made are stored.

A powerful feature of the Redkite Question Master module is the fact that one or more assessments can be automatically triggered from within a PowerPoint presentation allowing learning to be assessed. Many of our clients see this as a computer based learning package.

Our customers have identified Question Master as a powerful addition to the Redkite family of products and British Airports Authority, Highland and Islands Airports Limited and the

Manchester Airport Group have already identified the benefits of a shared question bank and associated assessments. The Peel Group have also elected to adopt this common approach. Our local authority FRS users met recently to agree a design and structure to a common question bank to be made available to all Redkite users. Whilst this group will initially focus on the needs of local authorities, airport users are also encouraged to participate.

In addition to creating a common question bank there is also a desire to create a common library of PowerPoint-based learning resources which, on demand, will draw down appropriate on-line assessments which will on completion automatically map to an individual's personal portfolio and update to provide proof that knowledge has been acquired or retained.

### Hosted Services

The airport sector is moving forward rapidly to update to the new web-based Redkite Tracker, Question Master and Asset Tracker systems, and most have elected for Redkite to provide the products via our hosted secure server facility. The benefits of this to our airports have included savings in costs as well as improvements in service. Cost savings have occurred because our clients have not had to invest in SQL Server user licences, web servers or buy in-house networking expertise. Service improvements have been brought about because Redkite support staff can communicate directly with end users, responding to their enquiries and resolving issues rapidly.

It is not only airports who have identified these benefits - a growing number of our local authority clients have also migrated to the Redkite secure hosted service. Within these organisations, cost and service benefits have been magnified in proportion to their user base.

**For information: Call 01926 814846;  
e-mail: [enquiries@redkitesystems.com](mailto:enquiries@redkitesystems.com) or  
visit [www.redkitesystems.com](http://www.redkitesystems.com)**