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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Technology To Track Bath, NY Firefighters at Emergencies

Ann Arbor, MI (February 9, 2010) – It's a problem all too familiar for volunteer fire departments: knowing which personnel have arrived on-scene and the location of the responders throughout the incident. If something happens and an evacuation needs to be called, how does the Incident Commander know if everyone is out safely if he doesn't know who is on-scene? What do they do?

If someone is trapped, there may just be a couple of minutes to find and rescue them. If everyone did make it out, the commander will be sending a rescue team in for a useless but extremely dangerous mission. What's the cost if they guess wrong?

That stressful and dangerous situation will be a thing of the past for Bath, NY Volunteer Fire Department, now that department officials are introducing new tracking technology called OnSite ERT™. The technology will replace previous, less reliable techniques to determine crew status during fire-related emergencies.

Thanks to an Assistance to Firefighters Grant, starting early Spring of 2010, the Bath VFD will begin utilizing OnSite ERT™ on the scene of emergencies. The technology uses a combination of lightweight ID tags, portable drop readers and incident command software that provides a clear sense of an emergency scene in real time – all from the screen of a laptop.

OnSite ERT, a portable and rapidly deployable system for tracking and monitoring first responders and equipment, is the brainchild of retired firefighter John Ellis and technology expert Dennis Carmichael. Following several months of research, development and live trials at mock emergency scenes, the product is gaining traction among fire departments nationwide, already in use by over 45 departments from Texas to New York and Canada with more on the horizon.

The OnSite ERT system has also proven beneficial for use in mutual-aid events, streamlining response and improving post-incident reporting and performance analysis, which helps departments comply with federal rules in place for emergency situations. The system provides electronic data demonstrating that rules were followed on scene, which helps limit legal risks in the event of a tragedy.

“For commanders on scene, OnSite ERT removes a tremendous amount of anxiety while also contributing to the safety of the crew,” Ellis said. “Our dream is to one day see every fire department using this technology. With OnSite ERT, fire departments might be able to send someone home who wouldn't have made it otherwise.”

About OnSite ERT

Based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, OnSite ERT offers a portable and rapidly-deployable system for tracking and locating personnel and equipment on-scene at emergency events. First installed in early 2006 in Michigan, OnSite ERT has earned a number of awards and accolades, including recognition at the Michigan Homeland Security Consortium's SELECT awards. OnSite ERT is on the DHS Authorized Equipment List and is approved for grant purchase. For more information, go to www.OnSiteERT.com.

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