

# Intelligent SMS connection for raising staff readiness in the rescue services

Built on Proha Mobile Workflow Manager™ platform

## Raising readiness

Rescue services are often faced with situations where staff readiness must be raised by calling on people to work overtime or be on standby. This process is complicated and challenging since raising the readiness can occur at any time of the day and may involve, depending on the situation and the mission, having staff with special skills or training on immediate standby. Also maintaining the normal operational status and level of rescue services must be taken into account when raising readiness.

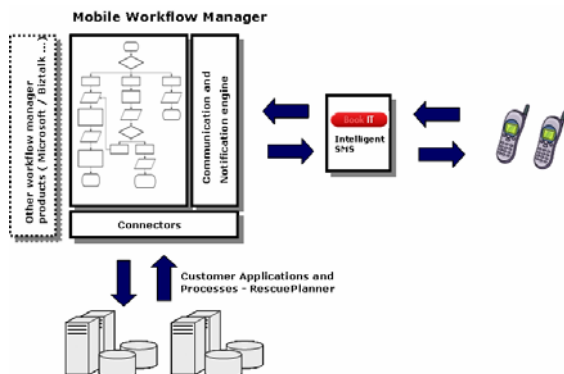


*Fire extinguishing at a shopping mall*

## Improving efficiency by integrating a mobile communication solution to a staff planning system

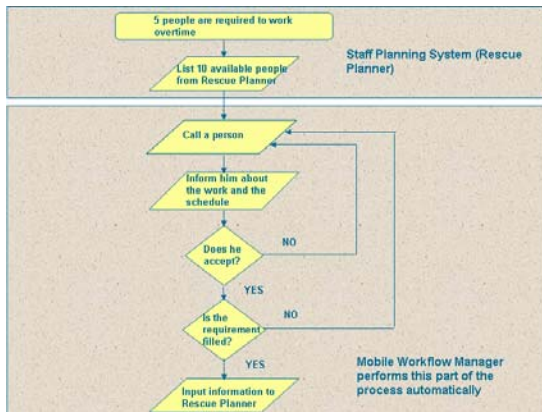
Integrating a mobile communications solution to a staff planning and control system allows rescue services to significantly improve the efficiency of processes for readiness raising. This is evident for example in a pilot project being conducted at the City of Helsinki Rescue Department for developing and improving the process for raising staff readiness.

In the development project, requests to raise readiness generated in the staff planning system (Rescue Planner™) are directed to a BookIT Intelligent SMS centre through an application developed for the Mobile Workflow Manager™ platform. The function of the Intelligent SMS centre is to relay the messages and the replies to the required mobile phones securely and within the context of the original task. The Mobile Workflow Manager relays the messages, manages the amount of messages and ensures that the requirements for the number of personnel and response time are met. In addition, the application sends the required people a confirmation message whether the task was accepted or declined.



*The technical principle of Mobile Workflow Manager with Rescue Planner*

The additional readiness raising feature of the Rescue Planner system provides a way for selecting the required groups of personnel and within the group the individuals to whom the messages is sent. Features for tracking the messages will be added to the system later. Information about the messages are stored in the staff planning applications database on an individual level.



*Flow chart for raising readiness*

Data from the pilot project indicates that when advanced mobile technologies are used for raising readiness more time is available for operative planning and action because personal resources are not tied down to “secondary tasks”. Also shortening the delays in raising readiness is of fundamental importance in performing rescue services.

### **Engaging the end user easily, securely and without training**

The unique “one button response” method of the Intelligent SMS allows interaction and dialog between the end user and systems of the organisation. Unlike many mobile solutions, the end user doesn't need to learn how to activate the system – the system activates the end user without him or her needing to remember service numbers, user names, passwords or other instructions.

Intelligent SMS provides a concrete solution for organisations that need to communicate with their employees in an efficient, economical ja reliable way. A regular SMS message can handle just one request at a time. Having several requests waiting for a reply at the same time can cause problems.

Since the end user needs nothing more than a GSM mobile phone that supports SMS messaging, the terminal device is already in everyones pocket. The end user is also not restricted to a particular service provider.

### **Raising readiness in international tasks**

Finland is prepared to provide assistance to neighbouring countries in accordance with bilateral treaties, as an EU member state and as a member of international organisations. In the neighbouring area the most relevant treaties are the Nordic NORDRED treaty and cooperation treaties with the rescue services of Russia and Estonia. The tight cooperation between Finnish and Swedish rescue services is also based on a convention for providing municipal services. Finland also has treaties with it's neighbouring countries on sea rescue and oil destruction measures at sea.



*Leaving on a mission at the City of Helsinki Rescue Department*



The rescue services also participate in international rescue missions as part the EU, the NATO partnership for peace and the UN. This is done by sending the FRF (Finnish Rescue Force) team composed of staff from the largest rescue departments (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Tampere, Turku) to aid with rescue and clearance tasks after accidents abroad.



*FRF performing a rescue at a collapsed building*

Similar mobile technology and system solutions as those used by the City of Helsinki Rescue Department for raising readiness could be used in assembling the standby formations for international missions. This would require a system to which the standby formations and call processes are entered and defined.