Reporting for dummies

Imagine an easy, quick, mobile and universal solution for those dreaded and time-consuming incident reports. This way more time can be dedicated to acting on an injury, security breach or vehicle accident rather than moving paper.
By **Brooke Showers**

If any idiot can post a photo of themself drinking beer on Facebook, add a comment while tagging multiple people, then activating the in-built global positioning system to record the location of their local drinking hole of choice via their iPhone, then surely these skills can be used for the power of good.

Using similar functions, an iPhone app has been released that has the ability to make critical incident reporting on mine sites for security and safety personnel more efficient and accurate.
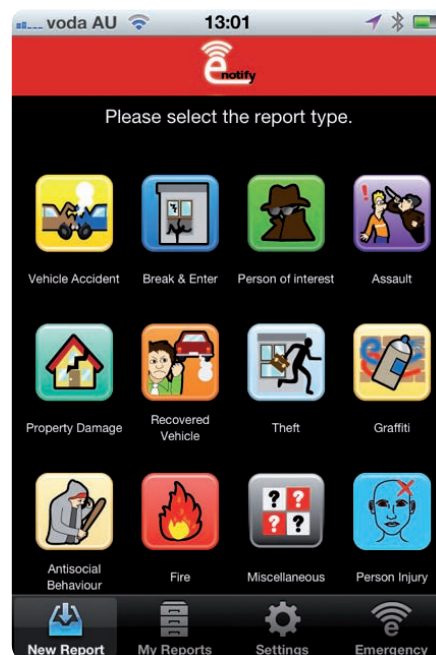
A joint venture between internet application developers InGenius Labs and the Australian School of Security and Investigations has designed the enotify app for the iPhone and iPad. The app makes accident reporting a simple and time saving process with immediate notification.

Enotify issues reporting allows users to record the details of an incident via image representations in a step-by-step format. It then collates the report into a PDF and emails it to the line manager, safety manager and the report creator.
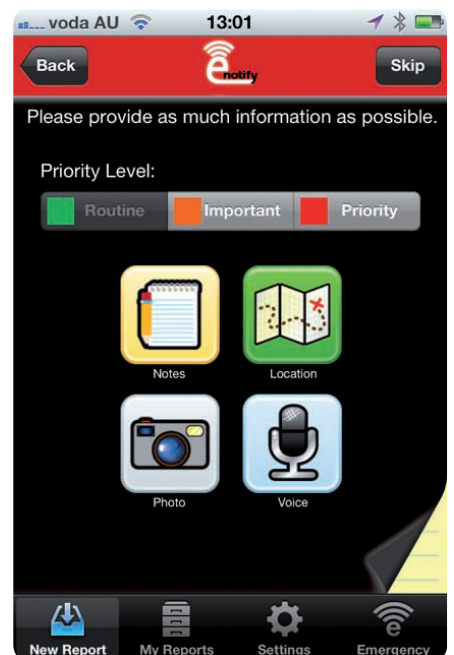
Users can add voice notes, take photos, lodge the GPS coordinates of the exact location of where an accident happened, and record basic details by following the prompts to help the people investigating the incident to receive all the critical information they need to know.

The photographs and the voice recordings all appear as links within the PDF report.

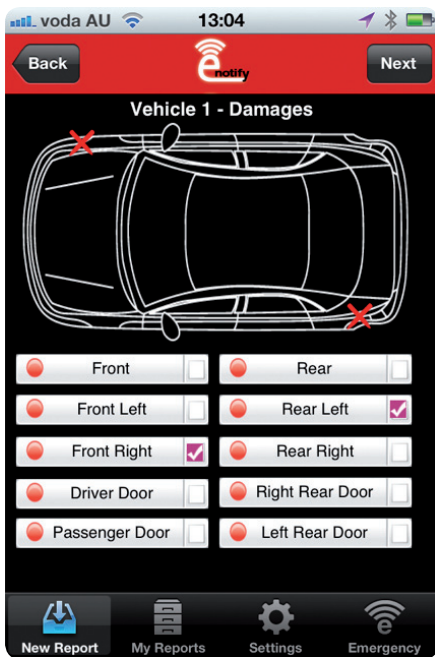This eliminates the time-consuming process of downloading information from separate devices and including extra attachments within the report manually once it has been written. ▶

The enotify app makes the most of touch screen technology for faster responses to report writing.
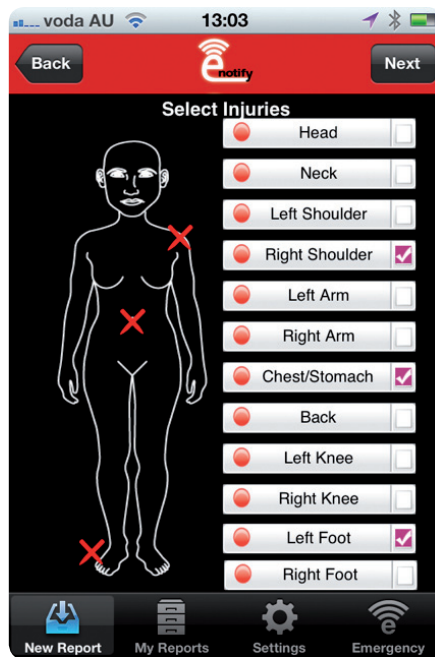

Users can prioritise the incident and add extra information in the form of voice recordings, photos and location.

Vehicle damage is much easier to record when looking at a visual diagram and using a touch screen.

By simply clicking on which parts of the body have been injured, the information can be sent to the safety manager for investigation.

ASSI International director Adrian Francis said this would make things much easier for the person on the ground.

"What usually happens is the health and safety representative will go out to the site of the accident and have a look at the situation, take some photos, get back in the car, head back to the office, download the photos, attach them to the report, convert notes into the report and write the rest of the report," Francis said. "By the time it actually goes through, it could be hours, sometimes days."

Enotify can be used for reporting assaults, theft, graffiti, personal injury and motor accidents.

The app, which costs $1.99 to download, is mainly aimed at the security and health and safety environments in the mining, oil and gas industries.

It also can be used by security personnel patrolling suburban streets.

ASSI International conducts security training with many oil and gas companies around the world, in particular in the Middle East, Malaysia and India.

The app is already proving successful at operations based in the Middle East to overcome language barrier problems where people from different nationalities are working on the same projects.

Francis, who worked in the New South Wales police force for 18 years and handled investigations as a detective for 15 years, said the most problematic area in the security industry was report writing.

"No one likes to do them," he said.

Francis found many of the safety ▶

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managers in the Australian mining industry had not necessarily been equipped with report writing skills. He said these people, while extremely knowledgeable about mining, had often been promoted into the safety areas.

"One of the biggest problems is health and safety and security managers in the mining and resources industry seem to spend more time trying to figure out what's in the report and filling in the gaps than actually acting on the report itself," Francis said.

For less than $2, the icon based app – designed to be operated by a child – greatly simplifies the reporting process. It provides a quick and manageable way of converting important incident information into a document.

It frees up the time safety and security personnel so they can focus on the solutions instead of the missing details.

Francis said there had been a major accident at a mine site near Leonora in Western Australia recently where a loader slipped down one of the roads on mud, crushing another vehicle and injuring another worker quite badly.

It took the company as much time to complete its reporting procedure as it did for it to repair the road.

With enotify, the reporting procedure would be much quicker. This app makes it very easy to go to the site, collect the details and with the push of a button, send the report to the elected email addresses.

One Perth-based mining company told Francis it received an incident report from an employee that merely said "a bloke got crushed by a car".

There were no photos, no explanation of how he was crushed and nothing mentioning the nature and extent of his injuries.

Francis said many of the workers compiling these reports had only basic knowledge of the procedures following an accident.

Enotify simplifies the procedure with its icon-based prompts. It prompts workers to gather crucial information about the accident scene.

There are screen diagrams of male and female bodies, where users can click on the body parts injured.

Users are also able to touch the screen to select which part of a vehicle was damaged when reporting traffic incidents.

The system will not let users progress until every step is completed.

Multiple witnesses can be recorded in the program as can multiple people and injuries.

The enotify app has a priority reporting function with routine, standard or high priority settings.

"Once the details are entered into the app, the designated manager responsible for compiling and filing the report will get notification there has been an incident straight away and can put things into place pretty quickly," Francis said.

Completing reports back at the office, away from the incident site can affect the recollection of key details which cannot always be retraced.
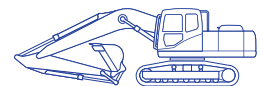
The enotify system is adaptable to different companies and additional icons can be added and tailor made.

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MINEPHONE

Currently, the app is only available for iPhones, which are not exactly renowned for their ability to handle rugged conditions.

However, despite the obvious limitations the technology still allows a quicker, more accurate way of compiling reports.

Even if workers have to drive to a sheltered area with internet reception, the process is still faster and more efficient than heading back to the office.

Even having to head to the surface to complete details after an underground accident to overcome some of the iPhone restrictions will still save time.

While it requires internet access to email the report out, the app can still be used without connectivity so the information can be saved until workers can get to where they can send.

Most mine workers own iPhones, if status updates and uploaded mining images through social media are anything to go by.

There are plans for the JV to set up enotify on the Android system. That will depend on how well the app is picked up in its initial stages.

Despite many advancements in phone technology, Francis is not convinced the mining industry has increased its reliance on the practicality of portable device functions.

"There is so much out there, and I still think people are very hesitant in using it," he said. "Some of it is very complex.

"I think we'll see it increase with all the faster networks such as 4G being introduced to the market."

At ASSI, a trend has been observed where the more complex the training for a program is, the less likely people will use the technology.

Programs such as enotify work best when they are not too technical to follow.

"Technology will give you indicators or guides, but technology is only as good as inputting the data or who is assessing the data coming out of it," Francis said. **AMM**