



INFOLINK SPECIAL EDITION

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THE NEW ARIS!

We are pleased to announce that the implementation phase of the Ambulance Response Information System (ARIS) Replacement Project, also known as the ARIS II Project, has begun. To celebrate this momentous occasion in EHS, this edition of InfoLink is dedicated to providing you with a basic primer of the project including information on its history, the system, people involved and future plans.

The ARIS Replacement Project Kick-Off Meeting



The ARIS Replacement Project kick-off meeting was held on April 14, 2000. At the meeting, from left to right are: Erik Alkenbrack, Sean Brooks, Frank FitzGerald, Mark Hull, Susan Jorgensen, John Haywood, Robert Wyllie, Keith Ewell, David Nemirovsky, Brian McGrath, John Prior, Fred Costello and Micheal Nabors. The photo was taken by the ARIS II Project Coordinator, Monty Rodrigues.

Background

In 1989 the Ministry of Health signed an agreement with the Ministry of the Solicitor General to modify their police dispatching system to meet the requirements of the Emergency Health Services (EHS) Branch for an ambulance computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. The resultant system, the Ambulance Response Information System (ARIS), was subsequently implemented at 19 EHS dispatch centres across the province.

While ARIS took Ontario's ambulance dispatching from paper based dispatch to computer aided dispatch; there are limitations in its mainframe architecture. Technologies could not be incorporated such as computer mapping and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), paging, Mobile Data Terminals (MDT), and radio/telephone integration. As a result, in 1995 a study was undertaken by the Ministry and MSGCS to review the options for replacing ARIS. The study looked at re-engineering the existing ARIS system, writing a new system, or purchasing a commercial system. The study concluded that acquisition of a modern off-the-shelf ambulance CAD system was the preferred alternative.

Selecting the New CAD System

In the latter part of 1997, while EHS was seeking MBS approval for the ARIS Replacement Project, work began on an RFP for a commercially available, turnkey CAD system. To ensure that the process for selecting a CAD resulted in the government obtaining the best system to meet its overall requirements, two advisory groups were established: the Executive Steering Committee and the Technical Working Group.

The Executive Steering Committee had representation from:

- Ministry of Solicitor General and Correctional Services
- Metropolitan Toronto Department of Ambulance Services
- Ontario Ambulance Operators' Association
- Ministry of Health including Emergency Health Services

The Technical Working Group had representation from:

- CACC Management
- Medical Air Transport Centre
- Ambulance operators
- Base hospitals
- Metropolitan Toronto Department of Ambulance Services
- Regional Management
- Minister of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services
- MOH Information Systems Division
- EHS Training & CACC Coordination
- EHS IT Staff

With Management Board's approval for the replacement project, in September 1998, the RFP was released. TriTech Software Systems from California, USA, was the selected vendor and contractual negotiations began. The ARIS Replacement Project took a back seat to the Year 2000 Project throughout 1999. However, in March, 2000, an agreement was signed with TriTech.



On Friday, April 14, the ARIS 2 Project Team met with the Trittech staff, including the TriTech Project Manger, Fred Costello, at a kick-off meeting. With this meeting, the implementation of the ARIS 2 Project officially began.

Frank FitzGerald, Senior Manager, Technical Services Unit, presents Mike Nabors of Trittech Software Systems with the first cheque for the new system while Mark Hull and Robert Wyllie of the ARIS 2 Project Team look on.

The System

The TriTech system that was chosen has a number of modules. VISICAD is the primary dispatching component. Some of the functionality that the system will be able to deliver is:

- Call taking for emergency calls
- Call taking and scheduling for scheduled patient transfers
- Direct hospital booking for scheduled patient transfers
- Dispatching
- Air ambulance flight planning and dispatch
- Operational reporting and event logging
- Data maintenance
- Support in managing CACC operations
- Management reporting and data extraction
- Map display
- E911 integration
- Radio telephone integration
- Time synchronization
- Seamless dispatch

The overall system will consist of independent servers in each of the dispatch centres. On a daily basis, these local servers will upload their data to a central data warehouse that will contain detailed and summary information on the delivery of ambulance services across the province.

Implementing ARIS 2

The basic steps in implementing the Trittech system are as follows:

- Customize the system to Ontario's needs
- Address data needs such as reports and the central data warehouse
- Prepare policy and procedures
- Train local and EHS staff in the use and support of the system
- Install the hardware and software
- Acceptance test all components
- "Go live" at each dispatch centre
- Provide on-going system support

The implementation of the TriTech system will take place in phases. They are:

Phase 1: TriTech will be responsible for the implementation of the new CAD system by providing hardware, software, training, and support services. A training system will be set up at the ARIS Training Centre in Mississauga over the summer of 2000. Two initial sites will be implemented over the winter of 2000/2001, one in Ottawa and the other in Kingston. EHS and local staff will play key roles in this phase but the emphasis will be on learning from TriTech.

Phase 2: TriTech will be responsible for implementing 3 more sites in this phase which is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2001. EHS staff will begin to take over the implementation during this phase. The Ministry will provide hardware, training and implementation services with assistance from TriTech who will provide software and project management.

Phase 3: EHS will take over the responsibility for the implementation of the remaining sites.

The Project Team consists of two integrated teams. One team consists of TriTech staff and the other of EHS staff and its partner representatives. The EHS team will gain knowledge and experience with the new system during Phases 1 and 2 so that they can take over the implementation in Phase 3.

Realizing that success can only come through the joint efforts of all stakeholders in the project, every effort has been made to seek participation from those stakeholders. Our partners, who will provide input into policies and procedures, functional specifications, data warehouse population and reporting, are from ambulance services, municipalities, hospitals and Toronto Ambulance which already has the system installed.

Project Contacts

Frank FitzGerald	Senior Manager, TSU	416-327-7884
David Nemirovsky	Manager, ITSS	416-327-7848

For more information about TriTech Software Systems and this project, visit TriTech's website at "www2.tritech.com".