



MOBILE ICT FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE

International Workshop on Mobile Information Technology for Emergency Response in conjunction with the ISCRAM 2009 Conference, May 10th, 2009, Göteborg, Sweden

Mobile ICT meeting the difficult conditions of emergency situations

- design approaches and technological aspects
- studying and understanding usage by professionals and the general public

QUICK FACTS

Call for Position Papers (1-4 pages)

Deadline: March 20th, Notification: April 6th, Registration: April 16th

Submit to: iscram-2009-workshop@mobile-response.org

4 page abstracts can enter a fast-track submission with credited reviews to Mobile Response 2009 (see www.mobile-response.org)

Workshop Web Page:

www.mobile-response.org/uploads/media/iscram-09-workshop.pdf

ISCRAM Web Page: www.iscram.org

INTRODUCTION

Many mobile ICT systems for emergency response look nice on slides or when demonstrated at fairs. But looking at them many people including prospective users get an uneasy feeling about actually using them during an emergency. Firefighters may wonder whether they really want to trust their lives to some new device and aid workers may wonder whether they really want to take some new system half way around the world to some natural disaster location out of electricity and spare parts but abundant with rain and people in need of immediate support.

We believe that these concerns are mostly well justified. Addressing them requires covering two distinct aspects. First, the technologies and designs must match the actual requirements of the fields. Given the diverse and extreme nature of many emergency response operations this is already surprisingly difficult to achieve. Second, even systems that match the requirements of the field still have to earn the acceptance of their users to use them efficiently, effectively and with informed confidence. Understandably, emergency workers are particularly reluctant about adopting new systems because they have to rely on them for the effectiveness of their support efforts or even their own lives.

Essentially, this challenge is the same whenever designing tools to support some non-trivial work process. The particularity of supporting emergency response with mobile ICT is that the requirements and constraints of the domain are especially hard to study and understand and that in terms of both the products and the process of design very specific solutions are required.

WORKSHOP

What we would like to offer with this workshop is an opportunity for emergency response practitioners as well as researchers and developers of mobile ICT to exchange their experiences with the challenges of creating mobile ICT for emergencies outlined above.

As an inspiration and focus for the discussion here are four dimensions of these challenges with related questions for which we invite participants to submit position papers on case studies, approaches, methods and techniques, recommendations and questions, technological concepts, system design, and core technology components:

Rough and dirty

- How to create and deal with realistic usage conditions when testing ICT prototypes for emergency situations?
- How to design and build robust systems?

Tough and stressful

- How to create, assess and handle realistic psychological conditions when studying activities and behavior in simulated emergency situations such as trials or exercises?
- How to design services and interfaces for users in high stress situations?

Complex and confusing

- How to observe and handle activities and behavior in large-scale emergency situations with many actors in a large area?
- How to design systems that reduce complexity and avoid information overload?

Trained and cautious

- How to make emergency professionals who rely on their current familiar equipment effectively use and assess innovative technologies during field trials?
- How to design innovative systems that deserve and effectively receive trust and that are highly usable by both domain experts and relatively novice users?

During the workshop, each participant will have time to give a presentation of 10-15 minutes. In order to fuel the exchange of experiences and discussion we ask all presenters to focus on contributing to one or more of the questions above by either refining them, formulating a hypothesis, or suggesting an answer and ideally by describing in concrete terms an experience they had or studied of using or designing mobile ICT for emergencies.

WORKSHOP CHAIRS

- Markus Klann, Fraunhofer FIT, Germany
- Jobst Löffler, Fraunhofer IAIS, Germany

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- Alexander Artikis, NCSR "Demokritos", Greece
- Chris Baber, University of Birmingham, UK
- Luca Chittaro, University of Udine, Italy
- Chris Johnson, University of Glasgow, UK
- Jonas Landgren, Viktoria Institute, Sweden
- Martha Larson, TU Delft, The Netherlands
- Andreas Meissner, Fraunhofer IITB, Germany
- Lucas Noldus, Noldus Information Technology, The Netherlands
- Jens Pottebaum, University of Paderborn, Germany
- Gurminder Singh, Naval Postgraduate School, USA