

FireTraC

THE SECURE DIGITAL APPROACH TO FIRE INVESTIGATION

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The New South Wales Fire Brigades (NSWFB) Fire Investigation and Research Unit (FIRU) is the largest fire investigation unit in Australia. The continual development of data usage and legal obligations when presenting evidence in court has required FIRU to develop a new methodology in collecting, interpreting and disseminating data.

Previously information was gathered via traditional methods (35 mm film and paper based forms) for internal and external stakeholders. The traditional methods used were a barrier to efficient service delivery.

FireTraC was developed to overcome these issues. It is a web based system that employs contemporary data collection technologies while maintaining the chain of evidence. The front end of the project utilises PC's in conjunction with digital camera and voice recording to enable the accurate recording of the fire scene.

FireTraC is the only digital data collection system that has been specifically designed for the specialist field of fire investigation. One of the main difficulties lies in not being too prescriptive and allowing the scene examiner the freedom to carry out a thorough investigation, this system achieves these goals.

Integrity of the system is of vital importance and this has been achieved by allowing access on several levels. It can vary from administrative to only individual page in read only access.

This new approach will allow data regarding fire investigation and fire research to be gathered digitally in a more comprehensive manner and allow that information to be interrogated by authorised users in a timely fashion.

This presentation will discuss the following points:

- Development
- Security of system
- Legal perspective
- Technical aspects

Key Words

Innovation, digital data systems, fire Investigation