

Protecting Students, Staff and School Property

White Paper Provided by Status Solutions

Lacking or inadequate situational awareness is one of the primary factors in accidents attributed to human error, according to research. Situational awareness refers to real-time information about what's happening in a single facility or across an entire enterprise for life safety, security, environmental monitoring and mass notification. It's achieved by enabling disparate monitoring, alerting, mass notification and reporting systems to work together so the appropriate actions can be taken to prevent loss of life, property, business and convenience. Situational awareness includes four primary components: monitoring, managed alerting, mass notification and reporting.

Monitoring

The first component of situational awareness involves monitoring in order to know when a triggering event occurs. And alarms from life safety, security and environmental controls must be conveyed in real time to the people most likely to be affected by the event – occupants – as well as those responsible for managing the facility. Occupants include students, employees, customers, residents, etc. Facility management includes individuals or teams responsible for the facility's operations (security, maintenance, etc.) and therefore the safety of the building and its occupants. While multiple alarm systems may be at work, they operate in siloes, independent of one another so alarms and therefore emergency response may be delayed. Situational awareness assumes that the monitoring of triggering events occurs from a centralized point via integrations with existing alarm systems and additional sensors. With central alarm management comes the potential for faster, more efficient emergency response as well as the opportunity for early intervention to prevent escalation.

Managed Alerting

The second component of a situational awareness strategy is producing managed alerts that include detailed information about a triggering event. Situational awareness gathers meaningful information and makes it available to those potentially affected as well as those responsible for remediation. For example, a siren alerts occupants and facility management to a potential safety, security or environmental issue. However, a siren lacks specificity – there's no

direction as to where the emergency is unfolding or where the nearest exits are, for example. With intelligent alerting, occupants and facility management receive more detailed information enabling them to respond quickly and in the most appropriate fashion.

Mass Notification

The third component of situational awareness is mass notification to ensure that pertinent information about a triggering event is delivered automatically or on demand to occupants and facility management in as many ways as possible. With a comprehensive situational awareness strategy in place, managed alerts will be delivered to key individuals, select groups or entire populations based on an organization's predefined emergency protocols. And these alerts will be delivered to numerous alerting devices, such as smart phones, pagers, emails, computer screens, two-way radios, PA systems, etc. By using multiple communication channels to deliver alerts, the risk of not receiving information about the triggering event is mitigated. If any one method should fail, the alternate channels provide redundancy so critical information is sure to be disseminated to occupants and facility management. Mass notification also includes delivering alerts to first responders including law enforcement and fire and rescue.

Reporting

By recording triggering events and their associated alarms, the managed alerts produced, and the subsequent notifications and acknowledgements, reports can be generated for insight into how a situational awareness strategy is performing. Organizations can use this information to analyze response times and escalation processes as well as to demonstrate regulatory compliance.

The Power of SARA

With the Situational Awareness and Response Assistant (SARA) from Status Solutions, any organization – including K-12 schools – can achieve complete situational awareness for life safety, security, environmental monitoring and mass notification. And you don't have to replace your existing alarm or communication systems to take advantage of SARA's capabilities. In fact, the solution can build upon your current network and extend the value of the technology investments already made. By ensuring that the right people get the right information on the

right devices in real time, SARA mitigates risk. And with the knowledge of potential threats, the right actions can be taken to protect people, property and operations.

Life Safety

With integration to emergency alerting, fixed panic, mobile duress, and a variety of other life safety systems such as fire panels, SARA helps protect people from injury and speeds emergency response. SARA turns alarms from these disparate systems into managed voice and text alerts for delivery to designated communication devices, including smart phones, landlines, pagers, emails, computer screens, two-way radios, PA systems, etc. SARA also provides enhanced location support for mobile duress devices within the Inovonics EchoStream Radio Frequency infrastructure through its patent-pending vector-mapping technology. Points of interest can be defined anywhere within or around a school to provide multiple points of data to more quickly and easily find those who need help.

Security

Integrating disparate systems into one common platform can enhance security. And new sensors (e.g., glass-break detectors, motion detectors, door contact alarms, etc.) can be deployed for additional security at any time. In addition, sensors can be added to new or existing video surveillance cameras to provide video pages. When a device alarms – such as a glass break detector – text, audio and video alerts can be sent to various communication end points, including a PC screen or mobile device. By enhancing alerts with video paging, responders can address the situation remotely, enabling a more efficient and appropriate response. Transmitters with key switches also can be set up as checkpoints, requiring security officers to insert a key into each checkpoint at certain intervals to generate a history within SARA to show that the appropriate rounds are being made.

Environmental Monitoring

Sensors can be used to monitor HVAC systems, power generators, cigarette busters in restrooms, and temperatures for food stores in cafeterias. If changes occur, SARA alerts the appropriate individuals or personnel groups for investigation and remediation. Most important, Status Solutions can integrate

SARA with existing environmental controls to expand alerting capabilities. If a building management system only sends emails, notifications can be expanded to mobile devices via SARA. Additional sensors can be added easily at any time.

Mass Notification

With SARA, key individuals, select groups or entire populations, including law enforcement and fire and rescue, can be notified automatically or on demand with emergency (e.g., inclement weather, lockdown) or nonemergency alerts through smart phones, pagers, emails, two-way radios, computer screens, etc. SARA works with multiple communication devices and delivers voice alerts through the unique Voice of SARA text-to-voice capability. Mass notification increases awareness, mobility and safety.

No Second Chances

SARA is a proven technology for reliable monitoring, alerting, mass notification and reporting. With the situational awareness SARA provides, action can be taken to prevent ignorance-based loss, ensuring that people and property are protected. With its wireless sensor network, robust integration tools and mass notification capabilities, SARA provides a wide view of what's happening in and around a school in real time. There are no second chances when it comes to safety and security, but situational awareness technology that can be customized to work in your school's environment holds the key to safety, operational continuity, and convenience/comfort.