



## NEWS Article

The Australian – IT Today

By Kelly Mills, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2006

THE Royal Australian Navy is using a mobile communication system that offers a high level of security for contacting personnel in times of emergency, such as a recall to base.

The technology enables the navy to contact sailors and officers on shore leave quickly so it can respond to incidents, such as when HMAS Kanimbla went to provide assistance after the Boxing Day tsunami.

An interactive mobile internet platform developed by Australian company Alacrity will be used at HMAS Kuttabul, which provides administrative, training and logistics support to uniformed and civilian defence personnel in Sydney.

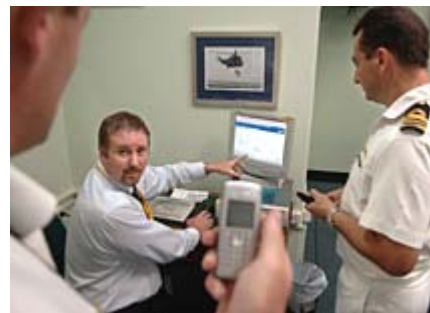
HMAS Kuttabul employs more than 2100 active officers and sailors and caters to 10 ships and more than 50 operational units.

Alacrity chief executive Adrian Tatham said the closed-loop environment for wireless mobile system, which went live in December, could be used to contact many HMAS Kuttabul staff.

Previously, HMAS Kuttabul's in-house emergency and evacuation communication process involved manually calling, emailing or SMS-ing staff.

Under the three-year contract using the platform a message is created on a server and sent to participants' mobile phones.

The message looks like a SMS on the phone but actually contains a dynamic link to the navy's back-end system.



**All aboard:** Alacrity's David Pinkerton, seated, shows the system to Lieutenant Commander Mark Napier, right  
Picture: Alan Pryke

The recipient is given access to the message after being authenticated by a two-factor security process.

Different messages can be sent out to the various participants, Mr Tatham said. The personnel could then access material such as video, files and maps.

They would also be able to make an in-depth response if needed.

The technology can be set to report when the minimum number of a ship's company required to sail have reported onboard.

By automatically alerting Command personnel once the required positions have been filled, a ship can be get under way and respond more quickly.

The downside of the system was if the staff member's phone was switched off, Mr Tatham said.

Nonetheless, it was still far better than the previous system, as the navy now knew how many people had logged a reply and how many people would need to be contacted using alternative means.

The system is carrier, network and device agnostic.

Alacrity hosts the system, which has a back-end interface to give the navy access.

The deal could be worth six figures over the course of the contract, including usage charges for the messages.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Red Cross in Western Australia, the Australian Customs Service and the Catholic Education Office also use the technology.

Mr Tatham said he was in the process of negotiating another eight deals internationally.

An overseas military organisation was considering using the system to provide restricted access security information messages to personnel.

Another client was considering the system for biometric authentication, such as a Bluetooth fingerprint scanner.

The Pentagon and the US Justice Department had shown serious interest in the platform, Mr Tatham said.

ENDS