

Mobile Report Entry V7

In keeping with the technology architecture evolution that we have undergone over the last few years, we have now come to the final product of the Versadex suite that needs a “fresh face”. The Mobile Report Entry (MRE) product is now on the design table for plans to evolve/upgrade to a “version 7”.

As with the RMS, MDT and CAD, the “v7” (version 7) changed the user interface to bring it up to a “current” presentation layer standard and, in some instances, pushing the envelope, as in the folder tabs of CAD 7. The “v7” evolution often changed the underpinnings or architecture of the product; for example, the introduction of a web server as part of the core product (RMS/CAD), the distributed services oriented architecture (SOA) of the CAD and touch screen redesign of MDT 7. All of the architecture changes required significant effort with the design goal that the product be relevant, flexible and evolvable for another 5 to 10 years – protecting your investment.

The Mobile Report Entry product will now be upgraded to a v7 with an enhanced presentation layer making it more compatible with RMS 7. The goal is to keep the MRE 7 user experience (look and feel, form layout, etc.) as close as possible to RMS 7 therefore minimizing training requirements. That is, an officer can use MRE or RMS and, although there are some differences (e.g. MRE Customization), the field layouts, edits and lookup tables remain the same. We recognize that a desktop working environment is quite different from a car so will ensure that MRE does not require a mouse for any action and does not overlay your screen with layer upon layer of windows (a standard Windows design but impractical for the car). Further, it has to work in conjunction and without compromising the officer's MDT (Mobile Data Terminal) use and functionality.

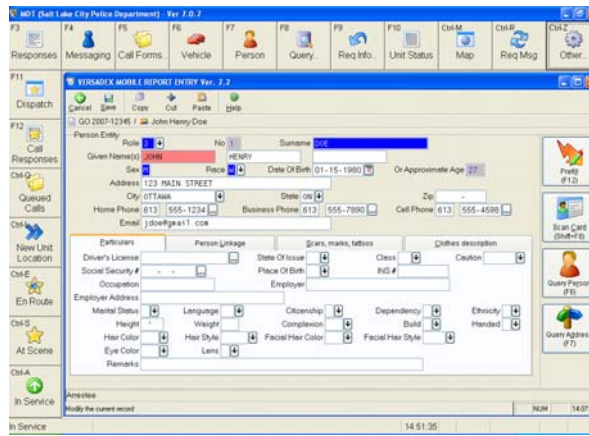
The MDT is a critical component for officer safety and call load manageability so it cannot tolerate a negative impact from any other application running on the mobile workstation. That is, as the officer's interface to CAD, CPIC/NCIC and RMS, it cannot be hidden or disabled in any way, shape or form. Therefore, the MRE is designed in such a manner to “fit” inside the MDT so the MDT buttons remain visible and active at all times. Further, as an alternative to the touch-screen, the MRE even supports a quick key enabling the officer to quickly switch back (set focus) to the MDT (i.e. view the dispatch). The MDT/MRE combination remains an integrated environment for the officer where the same function and shortcut keys provide the same or similar actions. The system is integrated for use - the officer is not the integrator!

The MRE fundamental design is to keep it as an off-line report entry tool using the MDT (Mobile Data Terminal) for all communication to the server (CAD, RMS, etc.). This method has the very real benefit where the MDT is able to prioritize and interrupt transmissions. That is, the officer is able to message, change status, query information and receive dispatches all while a report is being queried or updated to the RMS! The result is a very manageable “network pipe” between the car and the server delivering predictability and reliability to the officer. Further, by using the MDT to perform all queries, then all MDT query logging is centralized at the Message Controller. Over the years, we have found this design to be very effective.

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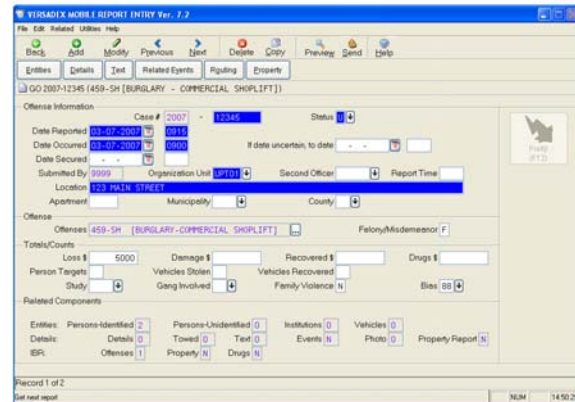
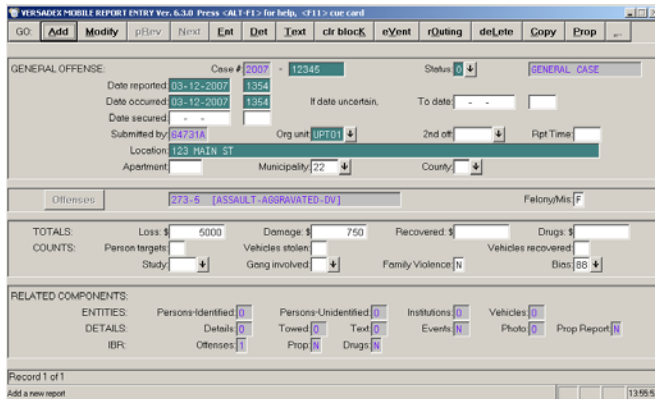


The following illustrates the new MRE v7 within the MDT v7 container:



MRE v7 will borrow many of the features added to RMS v7 giving the application a consistent look & feel in order to minimize MRE training requirements. MRE v7 will include other enhancements to make the user experience intuitive and user friendly for the officer working in the mobile environment (e.g. touch-screen enabled, daytime / night time colors, etc.).

Below is an illustration of the existing MRE 6.x and the newly proposed look and feel for MRE 7:



MRE 6.x (left) and MRE 7 (right)

MRE v7 UI Highlights

The following briefly highlights some of the major changes in the MRE user interface (UI). Highlights of MRE 7 User Interface differences from 6.x:

- Native WinXP, Win2000 and Vista display formats
- Buttons (displayed on the Action panel vs. prompt lines)
- Daytime/Night time color settings
- Top Menus
- Navigation buttons vs. menus
- Online help using Robohelp
- Proportional fonts for field labels, buttons, menus, etc.
- Fixed font for data fields for easy-to-read capability
- Touch-screen design
- Folder tabs vs. child windows
- Toolbars
- Column Sorts

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The following provides further elaboration on specific UI enhancements:

Toolbars:

As in RMS v7, toolbars have been added for the most common functions, and actions that “do something”. The toolbar icons are large enough that the user is able to select each option via touch-screen. Options on the toolbar change depending on whether or not you are entering information.

For example, when entering information (input mode) the save and cancel buttons appear.



Conversely, when navigating through the MRE forms, the back button is displayed.



Top Menu:

As in RMS v7, a new top-menu or drop-down menu has been added as an alternate method of accessing functions. This feature is intended to reduce the number of navigation buttons that will be displayed. As an example, the top-menu could be used for infrequent functions such as “Generate Ticket” or “Generate Arrest”.

Navigation buttons:

As in RMS v7, all options are available from the top-menu. However, to assist users, shortcut or navigation buttons have been added to allow users to quickly navigate to different parts of their report.

Action Panel:

Like RMS 7, the action panel contains the actions enabled for the specific form.

Folder Tabs:

Folder tabs are used to contain information; whereas in 6.x, child windows were used to contain the details such as clothing description.

The following illustrates navigating a report in MRE v7:

The screenshot shows the 'VERSADEX MOBILE REPORT ENTRY Ver. 7.2' application window. It features a menu bar (File, Edit, Related, Utilities, Help) and a toolbar with icons for Back, Add, Modify, Previous, Next, Delete, Copy, Preview, Send, and Help. Below the toolbar are tabs for Entitles, Details, Text, Related Events, Routing, and Property. The main form area displays 'GO 2007-12345 (ASSAULT) - 1301-0 AGG-FAMILY GUN'. The 'Offense Information' section includes fields for Case # (2007 - 12345), Status (U), Date Reported (03-07-2007 0915), Date Occurred (03-07-2007 0900), Date Secured, Submitted By (9999), Organization Unit (UPT01), Second Officer, Report Time, Location (123 MAIN STREET), Apartment, Municipality, and County. The 'Offense' section shows '1301-0 [ASLT AGG-FAMILY GUN]' and 'Felony/Misdemeanor F'. The 'Totals/Counts' section includes Loss \$ (5000), Damage \$ (750), Recovered \$, Drugs \$, Person Targets, Vehicles Stolen, Vehicles Recovered, Study, Gang Involved, Family Violence (N), and Bias (88). The 'Related Components' section lists counts for Entitles (Persons-Identified: 2, Persons-Unidentified: 0, Institutions: 0, Vehicles: 0), Details (Details: 0, Towed: 0, Text: 0, Events: N, Photo: 0, Property Report: N), and IBR (Offenses: 1, Property: N, Drugs: N). The bottom status bar shows 'Record 1 of 2' and 'Get next report'.

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The following illustrates entering a person in MRE v7:

As you can see, the look & feel has changed significantly but we will not change the functionality or in-car usability. Further, we are taking great steps to minimize the impact on the front-line users – we want to avoid (or at least minimize) the need for re-training.

Although we are focusing on the user interface of the MRE while developing version 7, we also plan to evaluate and hopefully enable a few new features including:

- Disk Encryption permitting an agency to use a Windows-based encryption method/tool to encrypt the MRE data folders (e.g. backup folders).
- Attachments so an agency can attach photos to their MRE report. An agency definable parameter will be available so the photo size can be limited to conform to the bandwidth available on your data radio network.

The US MRE 7.0 will be available by end of Q3 2007 (US) and we expect to showcase it at the 2007 Versadex User Conference.

We are very pleased with the evolutionary advancements of our products over the past few years and look forward to completing the MRE v7 – which then completes the “version 7” updates.

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