



Press release

22 November 2001

APLICOM ANNOUNCE SOFTWARE UPGRADE TO SUPPORT GPRS APPLICATIONS

World's largest roadside assistance service is first user of Aplicom upgrade to GPRS

Vehicle computer manufacturer Aplicom has developed GPRS support for its range of vehicle computers for professional applications.

The first customer to take advantage of the Aplicom upgrade is ADAC, the Europe's largest automobile club, which runs a roadside assistance organisation, with more than 1,000 vehicles. In each ADAC roadside rescue vehicle the Aplicom workstations will be upgraded to provide a GPRS connection to the dispatch centre. This involves replacing radio modems with GPRS-modems and upgrading the vehicle computer software to support GPRS.

GPRS is faster and more reliable than the present wireless data communications systems. It also includes many of the new technological benefits to be offered in 3G (third generation mobile networks). It is a sophisticated wireless packet switching system that allows small and large amounts of data to be transmitted with equal ease and speed.

Installation of Aplicom computers and use of GPRS follows an extended trial period at ADAC. Each year ADAC receives over 3 million calls for help from motorists. Management of all the information involved means that the data transmission between each patrol car and centre is totally reliable.

"We have set exceptionally high demands on the equipment," says Richard Baudrexl, responsible for ADAC's help services and technology. "The communications hardware simply has to perform faultlessly in the most demanding circumstances. Aplicom-computers have fulfilled our demands and we are completely satisfied with their reliability. The ease with which we can change networks clearly demonstrates the versatility of the Aplicom equipment.

"Other European automobile clubs with whom ADAC co-operates have been following our experiences carefully and they their share our belief in the Aplicom products."

Josef Auer, ADAC's Director for radio communications, says: "Our decision to choose Aplicom has proved to be an excellent and future-proof decision. The Aplicom ICA 2004 -series computers serves us well and we are very satisfied."

Aplicom offers GPRS support for all of its current products and will also offer it in all its future vehicle computer ranges. GPRS offers a new level of data communication for professional fleet management applications. It is ideal for frequent exchange of relatively short messages, which are often used in professional applications, and at the same time it is capable of easily exchanging larger amounts of data.

In fleet management applications GPRS allows vehicles to stay in seamless contact with the command and control centre, and exchange data with the home base systems virtually instantly. Aplicom vehicle computers with GPRS also facilitate the use of Internet Protocol-based applications in mobile units and help to make these solutions more cost efficient and more reliable than with the other GSM-based communication forms.

Aplicom vehicle computers are used for professional fleet management solutions by fleet operators such as hauliers, ambulances, public transport and field service organisations. "GPRS offers a level functionality so advanced that the proposed additional features of future 3rd generation networks will, in many cases seem insignificant," says Juha Savolainen, Technology Director of Aplicom.

ADAC has been operating Aplicom vehicle computer systems since 1996. This year the 1000th Aplicom ICA 2004 series vehicle workstation was installed in an ADAC vehicle. ADAC has announced that it is now starting to implement GPRS in the management of its roadside assistance fleet.

Aplicom

Aplicom is the leading manufacturer of professional IT systems within vehicles in Europe. The Finnish-owned Aplicom designs and produces technologically advanced, fully programmable computer hardware for the vehicle environment, compatible with all recognised software systems, and which accommodate bespoke software packages.

Over 90 percent of Aplicom's products are exported. Aplicom's products are used by, among others, Schenker-BTL, DaimlerChrysler, many drivers' associations in Central Europe, the Norwegian Post, rural bus services and several ambulance trusts in the UK.

With Aplicom's products, companies can link vehicles into their information system. Their service improves and fleet management becomes more effective, which enhances their competitiveness in the market. A vehicle computer adds to safety and makes better following of vehicles' movements and condition possible.

Aplicom's research and development unit and the production department are located in Äänekoski, Finland. Selling and marketing functions are carried out in Helsinki, Finland.