

Panasonic Recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.



# Toughbooks in Action

**Victoria's Metropolitan Ambulance Service use Panasonic Toughbooks for mobile patient care.**

Victoria's Metropolitan Ambulance Service (MAS) has issued its paramedic teams with fully ruggedised Panasonic CF-18 Toughbook laptops for use across its entire fleet of 160 ambulances.

Toughbooks are already being used by over 400 paramedics across more than 40 paramedic teams. By the end of 2006, more than 200 Toughbooks will have been rolled out to 1000 paramedics across around 100 teams.

The Toughbooks are used primarily in tablet PC form and run a software program called VACIS (Victorian Ambulance Clinical Information System), designed and developed by MAS to assist paramedics by simplifying the process of capturing patient data for further analysis and reporting.

The Toughbooks also hold information to assist paramedics whilst they work including clinical practice guidelines, animated work instructions, training materials and the eMIMS electronic drug database.

**TOUGHBOOK®**  
Computers for the *Outside World™*

**Panasonic**  
ideas for life



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“With MAS paramedics handling a quarter of a million emergency cases a year, it is essential that the equipment we use is reliable and able to withstand a harsh working environment,” said Cameron Crampton, General Manager Information Management Services, Metropolitan Ambulance Service.

“The paramedic environment is pretty tough, and can involve the Toughbooks being used in a range of situations. It could be loaded on the back of a stretcher, thrown in the back of an ambulance, or covered in fluids.”

Built to military specifications, the Toughbook is able to withstand the shocks, bumps and drops it faces in an emergency services environment.

During the notebook selection process, the Toughbooks were presented to paramedics from various branches in focus groups.

“The Toughbook was the clear winner in the technical evaluations and from paramedic feedback,” said Crampton. “Paramedics liked the rugged features and large screen of the Toughbook. We also liked the fact that we were not compromising technical performance for ruggedisation.”

“Prior to the use of Toughbooks, paramedics had to fill out a paper-based patient care record in freehand and the ability to analyse data was very limited. We have teams of people going through each record pulling out information such as cardiac, trauma and drug information. It's very labour intensive and we can only get a very limited range of information.”

Crampton added, “With VACIS we can get up to date information, enabling us to

produce reports which give us an extremely detailed view of the work MAS does from a clinical perspective.”

“By producing more detailed reports such as for trauma and clinical intervention, we can determine how, for example, we should target future Paramedic training.”

“There's nobody else that has this level of data available for such high-level research and analysis,” he said.

Currently, Paramedics using VACIS provide the hospital with a paper copy of the patient care record which is printed in the ambulance or at the hospital using the 802.11 wireless and Bluetooth features of the Toughbook. 802.11 wireless is also used to synchronise the Toughbook with the central VACIS database. An enhancement being developed will enable the patient care information to be wirelessly transferred directly to the hospital emergency department information system.

