

MONEY



Metals set to shine

Citing a firming recovery by China and stronger signs of an end to the recession in the U.S., BMO Capital Markets raised its two-year outlook for industrial-metal prices. **PAGE A40**

MAKE SAVE SPEND

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Mapping out the trouble spots

RAPID RESPONSE: Mike Morrow holds the key to dealing with possible Games crises

BY DAMIAN INWOOD
STAFF REPORTER

Vancouver is having a very bad day.

The 2010 Olympic Games are in full swing but to complicate matters, there's a plane crash at YVR.

And a major fire and a bomb threat means dozens of blocks of downtown have been cordoned off.

On top of that, a chlorine spill on the city's waterfront is sending a plume of toxic gas towards the densely-populated towers in the West End.

With a click of a laptop key, Mike Morrow throws up a map on a big screen that shows the affected areas and provides instant updates.

This is only a mock-up, but during the Olympics the mapping system used by EmerGeo Solutions, Morrow's Vancouver-based company, will be a key part of the city's emergency response plan.

"During the Olympics, the city's Emergency Operations Centre will be active and monitoring events across the city," Morrow says. "We could have a chemical release, a bomb, a hostage taking, a winter snowstorm and the city will have to manage its resources in response to that."

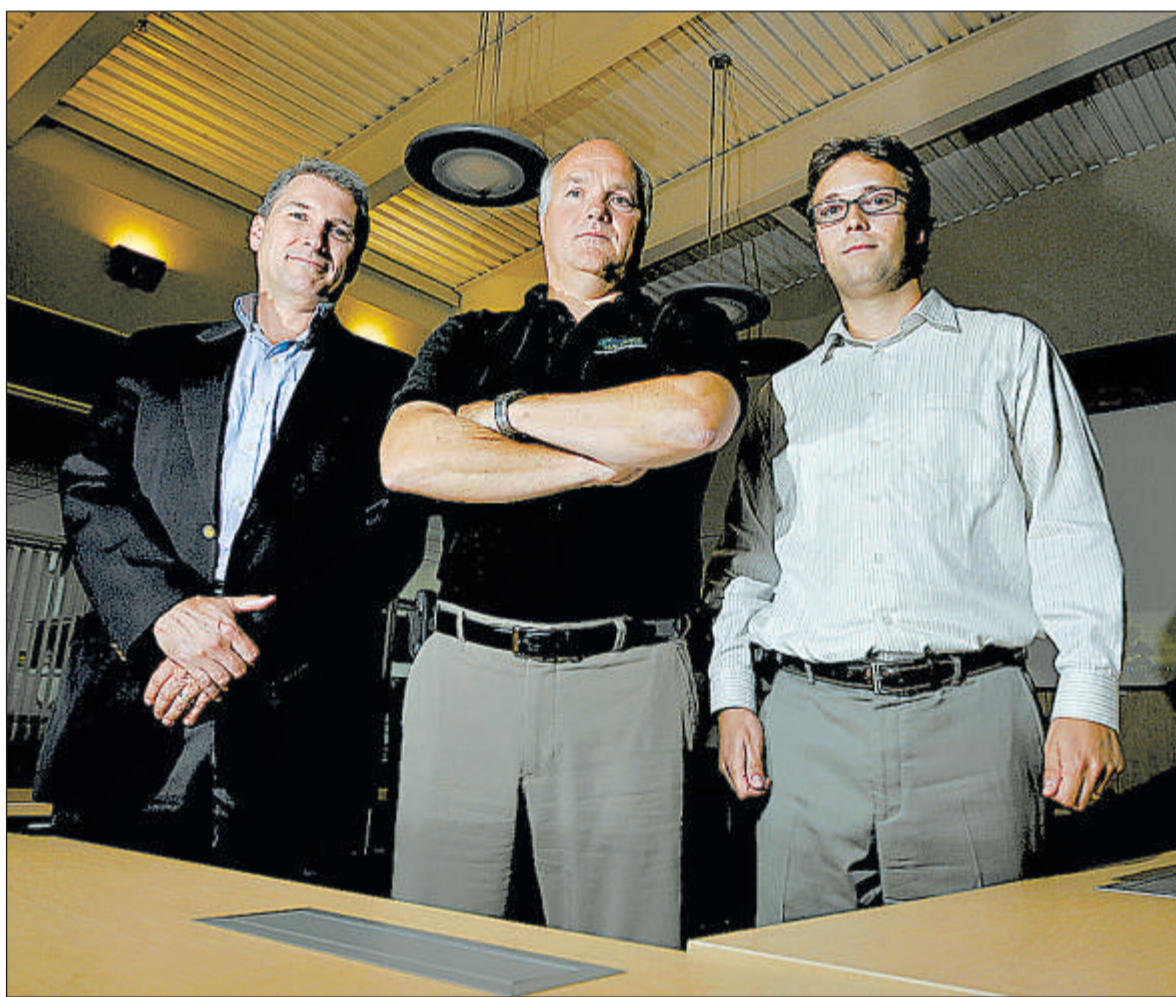
Morrow's system can grab data from a network of computers — everything from the city's 911 dispatch to information from TransLink, SkyTrain and B.C. Hydro.

As new situations emerge, they are added to the mapping system, whose text boxes detail what's going on.

If a group of Olympic protesters started to cause problems, for example, it would show up on the screen, Morrow says.

"The city's been a customer of ours for over five years using the EmerGeo mapping system," he says.

"We had it running during the Celebration of Lights, when it was used



Left to right: Mike Morrow, president and CEO of EmerGeo Solutions Inc., Kevin Wallinger, Vancouver's director of emergency management and Daniel Stevens, the city's manager of emergency planning will play key roles if Vancouver is faced with major troubles during the Winter Olympic. SAM LEUNG — THE PROVINCE

primarily by the Vancouver Police Department for security. They had live camera feeds, they had the EmerGeo fusion point, which is a dashboard that provides real-time information on incidents, whether it's stabbings or civil disturbance."

EmerGeo's technology is used by dozens of governments and groups from Arkansas to Abu Dhabi. It was born following the 9/11 attack on New York's World Trade Centre.

"Police knew about that second building coming down five minutes before it happened and there were fire guys going up the stairs," he says.

"But they weren't talking, not coordinated."

The system can overlay information on to Google map, letting responders see buildings in 3-D. It can zoom in and show floor plans of buildings, telling emergency

crews how to get in and how to get people out.

Morrow zooms in to get more data on the chemical spill scenario.

"We see it's on the water, so I know I've got environmental problems," he says. "The system has generated a plume, showing where chlorine would travel downtown. We need to know that it's heading into a residential area where there are schools and health care facilities."

The system also shows rail lines, stations and footbridges, letting emergency co-ordinators alert CP Rail if they need to stop trains from entering an area.

The technology also ties in to traffic cameras.

During the Olympics, road closures and Olympic lanes will be overlaid on top of the map.

While the RCMP is co-ordinating Olympic security around the venues, the city that will respond to any "urban domain" emergencies.

"Major flooding, a snowstorm or a criminal event like a dirty bomb would activate it right away," he says.

The system would automatically notify senior emergency planning staff and they would head to the Emergency Operations Centre at Hastings and Boundary.

Kevin Wallinger, director of the city's office of emergency management, is in charge of the EOC.

"During 2010 we'll be here for the duration," he says. "We'll have all of our Olympic transportation routes on the large-scale map with all the venue locations and transportation corridors. We'll have incident reporting and monitor news outlets."

Up to 20 people from different agencies will normally staff the EOC in shifts from about 8 a.m. to 2 a.m.

"If it's going to be a busy day, we can operate 24-7," Wallinger says.

Before the mapping system was introduced, Wallinger says, staff would lose time making phone calls, trying to get information, whereas the mapping system pools data and displays it instantly.

"The EmerGeo system is key," Wallinger says. "Having real-time information is vital when things happen quickly and you need to be able to react and make quick decisions."

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