

Center for Migrant Advocacy
Manila, Philippines

The OFW SOS Hotline System Overview

By: Joseph Henry B. Espiritu
for

MFA RRM Training
August 25 -27, 2010
Manila Philippines

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

Basic Concepts of OFW SOS Hotline System

- If you are a domestic helper being harassed by your employer, a site engineer who cannot find the way out of the Empty Quarter or a crew in a sinking cruise ship or an oil tanker, you must be in real danger. The good news, if you have your mobile phone with you, is that help can be a text away.
- From this concept, the CMA OFW SOS was launched on February 14, 2006.

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

Here's how the system works *(from the SOS sender's point of view)*

- Simply type SOS, put a space, type your message plus your name, and send to +63 9209 639 767 or (+63 9209 OFW SOS), and once sent, your messages are logged and saved in a computer and are automatically forwarded to Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) and concerned agencies of government for prompt and appropriate action.

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

The Basic Functions of the SMS Hotline System

- 1. The SMS Hotline System receives distress SMS messages.
- 2. The SMS Hotline System forwards the distress messages to the Action Officers and to the Philippine Government Offices (GOs). The distress messages are forwarded as SMS or as email.
- 3. The Action Officers receive the distress messages; call the distress sender; gather important information about his/her problems and decide for fastest but accurate resolutions. The GOs also receive the same distress messages.

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

The CMA OFW SOS hotline took almost one year of planning and system development before it was launched.

- The **GSM Modem** (RS232 Serial interface) was ordered in Hong Kong for 200USD.
- A Software was developed for the GSM Modem and for the PC to accept mobile text messages (SMS).
- Purchase of Bulk SMS from Clickatell (to send SMS to multiple recipients via internet connection.)
- Another **Software** was developed to automatically forward the saved distress messages in PC to the action officers mobile phones or email.
- Action Officers were chosen. These volunteers were already experts in handling distress cases.
- Internet Connection courtesy of IPD. In 2006, only few have **DSL connections**. Thus the Hotline System was placed in IPD Office, Manila for the system to have a 24/7 operation.
- A Software was installed to remotely access the system; for troubleshooting and software updates.

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

Nowadays, it is so easy for anyone to have his own SMS Hotline System. You can have it in just one day if you want to.

- You can buy a **USB GSM Modem** from any mobile shop for only 700 PHP (19USD). SmartBro or Globe Tattoo will do.
- You can freely download the Frontline SMS software which functions the same as our old system software.
- Almost everyone has DSL Connection at home. Thus, you can fix the system without installing a remote access software.

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

GSM Modem Comparison

2005



RS232 GSM MODEM (2005)

CONNECTION : SERIAL RS232, SLOW
NEEDS POWER SUPPLY
PURCHASED IN HONGKONG
PRICE 200USD

2010

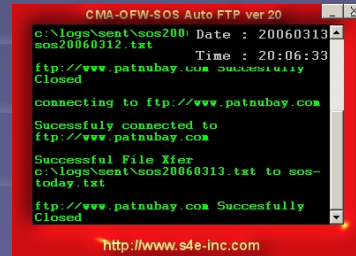
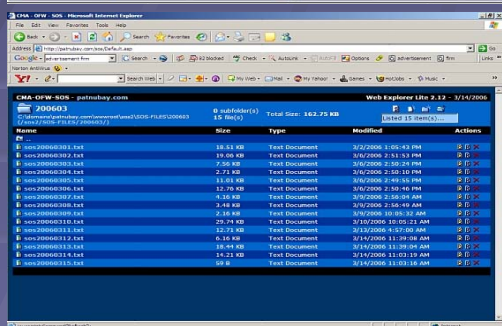
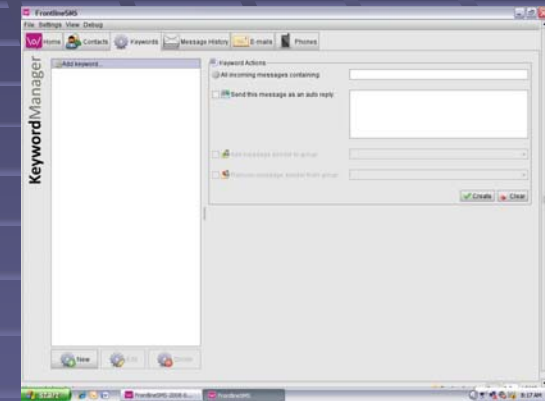
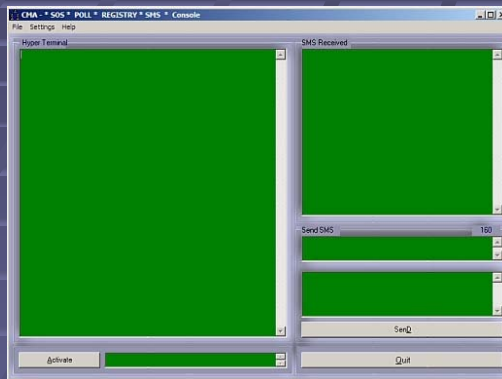


USB GSM MODEM (2010)

CONNECTION : USB, FAST
NO NEED FOR POWER SUPPLY
CAN BE PURCHASED IN ANY MOBILE STORE
PRICE 19USD

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

Software Comparison



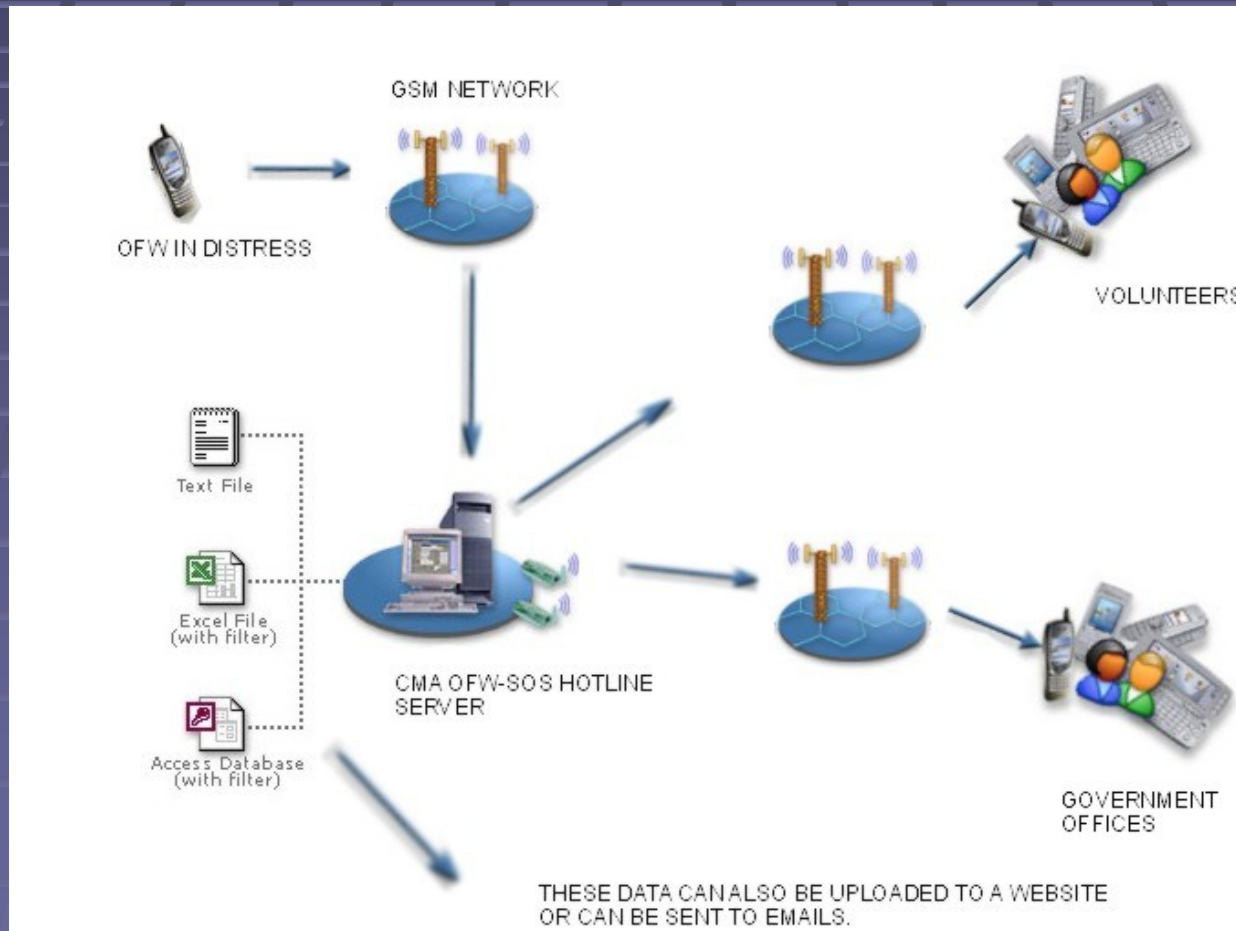
SOFTWARE (2010):
FRONTLINESMS SOFTWARE
AVAILABILITY: FREE DOWNLOAD
FUNCTION: SAME AS OFW SOS HOTLINE SYSTEM PLUS MORE

SOFTWARE (2005):
CMA OFW SOS SMS HOTLINE SOFTWARE
AVAILABILITY: DEVELOPED BY VOLUNTEERS
FUNCTION: AS EXPLAINED IN EARLIER

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

- **Yes five years ago, the CMA OFW SOS Hotline was already a sophisticated hotline system. It was tailored for actual handling of cases and rescues.**
- **The GOs (OWWA or OUMWA) did not want to take part of this project because they claimed to have their own SMS Hotline system. As an OFW, I am sure that their system was not successful. The OFWs do not know of its existence.**
- **Take note that our system is useless without the Action Officers who receive the message on time and act swiftly to help the distress SMS sender.**
- **These volunteers are part of the reasons why the OFW SOS Hotline Project was and still a SUCCESS.**

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System



<http://anginyonglingkod.com/?n=AIL.CMA-OFW-SOS>

CMA – OFW-SOS Hotline System

THANK YOU!