

## APPENDIX 3.B-

### The Ideal Thermal Imager for the Fire Service: A Fire Chief's Perspective

*Bruce Varner, Fire Chief, City of Santa Rosa Fire Department, CA*

A Fire Chief's perspective on the ideal Thermal Imager for the fire service should start with affordability (low cost) so as to assure the ability to place at least one imager on every fire company in the department. The preference would be to place a unit on every interior position, with each sector (division, group) officer and command. The additional officer units should be of a design that allows for effective use in daylight conditions to evaluate the structure. In preparing for the Workshop on Thermal Imaging at NIST several fire chiefs and senior fire officers were consulted to develop the following list of items considered important from a fire chief's perspective.

- Low cost
- Light weight
- **Unfailingly reliable** (Mission critical)
- High Quality Image
- Hands free – Helmet or face piece mount
- Easy to interchange between users
- Firefighter Friendly (intuitive)
- Low maintenance – Very, very rugged
- Long battery life (low cost replacements)
- Long term warranty (or option to buy extended warranty at reasonable cost)

The list is not all-inclusive nor in a particular order of importance. Cost has had an impact on the ability of the Fire Service to get units on all companies and indeed has limited the ability of some departments to have even a single unit available. Various public and private grant programs have had a positive impact on the ability of departments to obtain imagers in the past couple of years. The ability to use a Thermal Imager for size up, interior evaluation, and indeed as an effective tool for search and rescue lies in having at least one imager available on the first arriving fire department resource.



**NIST** National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Workshop on Thermal Imaging  
Research Needs for First Responders

**Santa Rosa Fire**

### The Ideal Thermal Imager for the Fire Service

#### A Fire Chief's Perspective



Bruce H Varner  
Fire Chief  
Santa Rosa, CA

### The Ideal Thermal Imager for the Fire Service

**Santa Rosa Fire**

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- Lifetime unlimited warranty
- Certification and Testing (NFPA)

ok, so maybe a couple of these aren't all that practical, yet!

## The sizes, they are a changing

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## Low Cost, we're getting closer

Santa Rosa Fire

\$75,000.00  
 \$25,000.00  
 \$16,000.00  
 \$12,000.00  
 \$ 8,000.00

The Fire Department has had a camera for a year, and would like to have them on every piece of fire equipment, but the cost is prohibitive, said Capt. Bill. Following the save of 2 firefighters in flashover incident.

Ok, so when do I hear \$2000.00 or less? Now we are beginning to talk about 1 for every riding position. We really will have the ability to see in the fire environment.

It becomes another piece of PERSONAL protective equipment.

BATTERY

## Did I mention rugged?



Santa Rosa Fire



## Let's review this again

Santa Rosa Fire

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