BI TAD®

Q&A with Jock Waldo, with Jock Waldo, Vice President, Marketing & Operations

BI TAD offers community corrections agencies, judges, DUI/DWI courts and treatment providers with another option for transdermal alcohol detection.

Jock Waldo, Vice President of Marketing and Operations, has nearly two decades of experience with multiple facets of BI's business including sales, marketing, manufacturing operations and product development. Below, Jock addresses some of the most frequently asked questions regarding TAD.

Q: *There has been a lot of buzz about transdermal alcohol monitoring lately. Tell us about TAD and why this product is catching on so quickly.*

A: As most industry professionals know, there have not been many options for transdermal alcohol monitoring until now. I think people are realizing the value that a continuous alcohol monitoring device can bring, particularly considering the limitations of some of the existing methods of monitoring sobriety. With both the overcrowding we're seeing in many jurisdictions and the desire to treat people within the community, tools such as TAD that can help promote sobriety and accountability are becoming all the more important. Last, and very importantly, TAD offers something not available until now – house arrest and continuous transdermal alcohol monitoring in one device.

Q: *How do the RF and alcohol monitoring capabilities work together?*

A: Reinforcing sobriety requirements with curfew restrictions provides stability for offenders, making for a complementary pairing. Until recently, agencies had to use two different devices for alcohol and electronic monitoring. Combining the two into one monitoring system reduces the amount of equipment they use in their programs. Managing inventory can become much simpler – especially for officers stretched further and further today.

Q: *Does TAD require secondary testing to confirm someone has been drinking?*

A: No, TAD does not require secondary testing. TAD has single-source admissibility and can effectively distinguish between drinking events involving consumed alcohol and those events involving outside interferrants. I think it is important to note, however, that each agency has to establish its own protocols for alert response and sanctions. And, as we've seen in our 25+ years of working with community corrections agencies, those are unique to almost each customer.

Q: *Will BI Sobrietor customers have to switch to TAD?*

A: BI has a strong contingent of agencies who are Sobrietor users. We have encouraged any existing customers who'd like to try out the new technology to do so. More and more customers are experiencing success by using TAD. At the same time, we recognize the two devices work differently and have their individual merits. Each agency has to use the appropriate technology to meet caseload and budget needs. We intend to support both products well into the future as we continue to expand our full continuum of technology solutions.

Q: *How does TAD fit with BI's existing continuum of offender monitoring and programming solutions?*

A: We're seeing agencies implement TAD in a number of ways. Some are using it as a stand-alone sanction, while others are using it as an alternative to detention. Judges and courts are using it as a sentencing tool for DUI and DWI offenders. TAD is also a natural complement to treatment efforts so can be coupled with the cognitive behavioral therapy offered within our programming.

Q: *How does TAD differ from a fuel-cell based device?*

A: TAD relies on a membrane electrode to sense for alcohol rather than using a fuel cell. One of the main differences between TAD and a fuel-cell based device is the sampling rate. TAD continuously senses for alcohol, takes a reading every minute, and records an average reading every five minutes. Alcohol monitoring devices that use fuel cell technology are not able to test as regularly due to battery limitations. Fuel cells are also affected by being immersed in water because they take air samples using a pump in the device. Sampling while submerged can pump in water which can impact device function. TAD, on the other hand, can be submerged in up to three feet of water which enables clients to bathe.

Q: *Can I see TAD graphs when logging into your monitoring software?*

A: Yes, graphs detailing drinking events and tamper information regarding skin resistance and temperature can be accessed in TotalAccess, our monitoring software. A detailed view of transdermal alcohol content (TAC) is provided by simply running a TAD Activity Graph report in the software. For instance, agencies can see the details of a rise and fall of an alcohol curve or a sharp spike due to an external interferant. The report also shows information related to RF schedules such as enters, leaves and out of range messages.