Program News

Technology Demonstrator Contract Awards Coming

In collaboration with the DHS Joint Wireless Program Management Office (JWPMO), the DHS Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate will be awarding contracts later this quarter for a technology demonstrator project, part of the DHS Tactical Communications Network (TacNet) program. The proposal evaluations and review process are now complete. Vendor notifications could come as early as later this month.

The Wireless Broadband Technology Demonstrator Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) 12-10 was released in August 2012. The announcement seeks technology solutions to enable a graceful transition as DHS components modernize wireless communications technology and prepare to join commercial and public safety networks, including the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) being built by the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). The NPSBN, mandated by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, offers a single interoperable network for the law enforcement and public safety communities, a key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission report, and a crucial resource for DHS components to dramatically lower costs for building and maintaining wireless communications infrastructure. The BAA seeks development and testing of technology to facilitate a graceful transition to existing and emerging commercial public safety networks, including the NPSBN as it is built over the next ten-to-twelve years.

“This project is imperative to the development of effective, interoperable tactical communications for CBP, DHS, and organizations throughout the public safety and law enforcement communities,” said Acting JWPMO Executive Director Cyndie Walters. “We must move on to long term evolution technology and do so in a cost effective manner. Otherwise, piecemeal efforts are financially unsustainable and will not meet the objective of interoperable communications that ensure officers and agents are able to communicate with one another.

The JWPMO has produced an action-packed DVD explaining the JWPMO wireless approach, featuring footage from most DHS components. The DVD soon will be available at www.dhs.gov. For information about obtaining hard copies of the DVD, contact JWPMO-COMMS@hq.dhs.gov.

Commission report, and a crucial resource for DHS components to dramatically lower costs for building and maintaining wireless communications infrastructure. The BAA seeks development and testing of technology to facilitate a graceful transition to existing and emerging commercial public safety networks, including the NPSBN as it is built over the next ten-to-twelve years.

“The project is imperative to the development of effective, interoperable tactical communications for CBP, DHS, and organizations throughout the public safety and law enforcement communities,” said Acting JWPMO Executive Director Cyndie Walters. “We must move on to long term evolution technology and do so in a cost effective manner. Otherwise, piecemeal efforts are financially unsustainable and will not meet the objective of interoperable communications that ensure officers and agents are able to communicate with one another.

Inside this Issue

| Technology Demonstrator Contract Awards Coming | p.1 |
| JWPMO DVD | p.1 |
| DOJ Partnership | p.2 |
| JWPMO Exhibit Booth | p.2 |
| CANUS LECI (Canada) | p.3 |
| Fact Sheets/Brochures | p.3 |
| CBSCN (Mexico) | p.4 |
| Bi-National Working Group | p.5 |
| Enterprise Management | p.6 |
| Three-Pronged Approach | p.6 |
| Component News: ICE | p.7 |
| Component News: CBP | p.8 |

March 2013  Visit us online at www.dhs.gov, or email JWPMO-COMMS@hq.dhs.gov
and have access to data during tactical operations.”

The innovative technology sought in the BAA must maintain mission critical, push-to-talk voice radio capabilities now available on P25 narrowband spectrum, but accommodate dramatically expanding and evolving needs for data and video to support the CBP/DHS mission, including biometrics, image and large file transfers, access to more sophisticated databases, the ability to better pinpoint locations, and streaming video, which require broadband spectrum. The maximum amount of the award to develop technology demonstrator prototype technology is $7.5 million.

**Department of Justice Partnership On Track**

JWPMO offices in Virginia are being readied for the co-location of Department of Justice (DOJ) wireless program counterparts. The Chief Information Officers (CIOs) of DHS and DOJ signed an agreement on October 10, 2012 to collaborate on the development and operations of wireless communications systems. The agreement is viewed as a linchpin leading to more effective and efficient wireless communications throughout the public safety and law enforcement communities. DHS and DOJ will share certain infrastructure and utilize the combined bulk purchasing power of two federal departments, plus other potential partners, to facilitate evolving technology and interoperability.

An integral motivating factor in the development of this DHS, DOJ agreement was “recognition continuing the current course of voice-only mission critical P25 systems is unsustainable going forward, would consume all available investments, and would keep agencies from focusing on emerging needs,” said JWPMO Acting Director Cyndie Walters.

According to Walters, the DHS, DOJ partnership will seek ways to “converge and gracefully migrate from P25 mission critical voice, to tactical grade broadband mobility incorporating push-to-talk voice, video and data conforming with commercial Long Term Evolution (LTE) standards.” She said the migration path also needs to “support operation on both P25 and LTE networks to enable a graceful migration path as the FirstNet NPSBN is built over the next several years. Commercial LTE will fill in gaps until NPSBN coverage exists in an area.”

Walters said the NPSBN always will be the first priority choice in any area when available.

The JWPMO exhibit booth highlights photos from DHS components. It will be featured at the U.S. Secret Service Law Enforcement IT Day on April 16 in Bethesda, Maryland. Contact JWPMO for information on scheduling the booth or sharing space at events.
U.S./Canada Communications Partnership Pilots Underway

Testing began in February on a communications connection between Detroit, Michigan and Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This is the second of two pilots the JWPMO is participating in through the Canada United States Law Enforcement Communications Interoperability (CANUS LECI) program. Initiated in 2011, CANUS LECI is a partnership between the United States and Canada to promote communications interoperability on the U.S./Canadian border. Interoperability between public safety and law enforcement communications systems is a key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission report.

The CANUS LECI project is implementing a one-year pilot of a system that provides secure communications between DHS and its Canadian partners, and serves as a foundation for the Tactical Communications Interoperability Framework (TIF) being facilitated by the JWPMO. Initially, the primary focus is on interoperable communications between International Border Enforcement Team (IBET) members, including Customs and Border Protection, the Coast Guard, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) in two focus areas: Blaine, Washington and Detroit, Michigan.

The one-year pilots are using an Internet Protocol (IP)-based switching system that securely matches the location and identity of agents along the border to their counterparts across the border. The first sector to pilot the CANUS-LECI program was Blaine, Washington, which began in late 2012. The second pilot sector is Detroit. These connections and the IP switching system allow each country to maintain the autonomy of its networks with no impact to spectrum or current interconnection agreements.

The IP-based system makes it possible for multiple interconnections to occur, providing eventual interoperable capabilities to DHS and other federal partners, as well as state, local, and tribal first responders.

CANUS LECI helps answer the President’s “Beyond the Border Action Plan,” allowing U.S. and Canadian border enforcement personnel to coordinate effective bi-national investigations and responses to border incidents, while improving officer and public safety.

JWPMO Fact Sheets, Brochure. Fact sheets and brochures have been produced explaining the JWPMO enterprise-wide approach to wireless communications modernization. Materials are soon expected to be available on www.dhs.gov. For information about obtaining hard copies of the JWPMO materials, contact JWPMO-COMMS@hq.dhs.gov.
Cross Border Secure Network Coming Online

More communications connections between the United States and Mexico are coming online through a project being directed by the Joint Wireless Program Management Office (JWPMO). The Cross Border Secure Communications Network (CBSCN) is a microwave based system connecting ten (10) paired U.S. and Mexican government tactical radio communications centers.

Initial construction and installation of the CBSCN equipment has been completed, with all sites functionally connected. All 10 city pairs (10 Mexican cities paired with 10 U.S. cities) have been installed and seven city pairs are in the approval process for operational mission-critical voice communication. The remaining three city pairs are functional, but require deeper integration into the Land Mobile Radio (LMR) network prior to operational usage. Additional users at the federal, state, local and tribal level, as well as added capabilities, such as video and data, will be included as agreements and technologies allow. A formal concept of operations has been approved for the CBSCN project.

CBSCN allows DHS and other federal agencies, as well as state, local, tribal, and first responders on both sides of the border to seamlessly and directly connect their communication systems to field agents on their respective radio networks.

CBSCN improves communication with the government of Mexico in natural disasters, border violence incidents, and information sharing cases by enabling immediate communications between pertinent agencies on either side of the border.

The system offers an approved communications alternative to the time-consuming process of researching individual phone numbers to reach contacts during a crisis. In the past, communications may have taken up to 40 minutes to accomplish during a border violence incident. That time can be drastically reduced with the direct access and interoperability provided by CBSCN.
JWPMO Team Represents DHS on U.S./Mexico Border Communications

More than 45 people met as part of the Ninth Bi-National Working Group (BWG) representing the governments of Mexico and the United States on February 20-22, 2013 at South Padre Island, Texas. From Mexico, representatives of various federal and state law enforcement entities attended. The U.S. delegation included officials and attendees from DHS, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense Northern Command (NORTHCOM). In addition to the JWPMO, DHS was represented by the following CBP offices of Information and Technology, Field Operations, Border Patrol, Air and Marine, and the Joint Operations Directorate.

Much of the week’s discussions centered on the continuing need for training – operator and technical – on both sides of the border. In addition, ongoing discussions continued regarding finalization of bi-lateral documents, including a standard operating procedure and a strategic communications plan and the creation of a service level agreement. Both governments are committed to working together to make this innovative approach to communications between and across the border a success. The Bi-National Working Group facilitates the collaboration of Mexico and the United States in completing the Cross Border Secure Communication Network (CBSCN) project. CBSCN was established in 2006 to address the limitations of previously independent efforts to leverage existing infrastructure and resources on the U.S./Mexico border. Goals are to resolve cross border interoperability challenges, better resist and reduce border violence, and improve border security.

These quarterly BWG meetings enable the expedient resolution of action items, allow the two countries to collaborate on the project, and offer opportunities for discussion with all participants regarding various issues and challenges faced in the course of project fulfillment. This working group meeting aligns to the DHS Quadrennial Homeland Security Review mission, goals, and objectives as the CBSCN supports Mission 1: Preventing Terrorism and Enhancing Security; Mission 2: Securing and Managing Our Borders; and Mission 5: Ensuring Resilience to Disasters. CBSCN allows officers on both sides of the border to communicate with one another during routine and emergency situations, which enhances our security by preventing and halting attacks and ensuring quicker responses during an emergency situation.

The 10th BWG is tentatively scheduled for mid-June 2013 and will be hosted by the Mexican government in Mexico City.
Enterprise Management Meeting Established

In response to a growing number of requests originating from across DHS, the JWPMO has established a bi-weekly enterprise management meeting to accommodate the increasing need for a broad range of JWPMO services.

Every day, the JWPMO fields a variety of requests to help with a range of services that include program management, engineering, spectrum management, and information about the Tactical Communications (TACCOM) Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract, as well as ideas about interoperability and broadband.

This enterprise meeting is now being held every two weeks with key decision makers from the JWPMO and the major DHS components to determine prioritization of requests and associated plans of action. The JWPMO is developing and implementing new practices and processes to accommodate the wide-ranging set of requirements and constituents across DHS meet the goal of providing frontline officers and agents with converged mission critical voice, data, and video capability on a common broadband wireless network. JWPMO management expects this enterprise management meeting will result in improved allocation of resources, more informed decision making, and enhanced responsiveness to requests from DHS components.

JWPMO Three-Pronged Approach:

The JWPMO engages in a concurrent three-pronged approach to manage enterprise-wide wireless modernization.

1. **Land Mobile Radio (LMR) Upgrades** – The JWPMO works with DHS component agencies and partners to build awareness and facilitate the modernization of communications systems in conformance with common standards.

2. **Digital Platforms/TIF** – The JWPMO works with DHS component agencies and partners to build awareness and promote the development of processes and digital communications platforms as part of establishing the Tactical Interoperability Framework (TIF) of interoperable standards, which leverages the Interoperability Continuum sponsored by DHS SAFECOM.

3. **TacNet** – The JWPMO is creating partnerships and working with commercial entities to manage the Tactical Communications Network (TacNet) program focusing on next generation voice, video and data communications to integrate into the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN). Working with DHS Science and Technology, the JWPMO is facilitating a technology demonstrator project to promote innovative technology development.
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
Super Bowl XLVII Deployment

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) tackled security duties for the National Football League (NFL) Super Bowl held February 3, 2013.

ICE agents with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Tactical and Wireless Communications (TACCOM) deployed a Mobile Communications Command Center (MCC) and a Mobile Communications Van (MCV or Raptor) in New Orleans. Seven support personnel were detailed to New Orleans, Louisiana on January 28, 2012 in direct support of HSI Special Agent in Charge (SAC) New Orleans and the City of New Orleans Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

HSI TACCOM maintained two fully operational communications sites with the MCC directly supporting the EOC operations two blocks from the Superdome and the Raptor providing a full array of communications support at the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) located at a remote site approximately six miles from the Superdome. TACCOM maintained active operational support for both sites from January 30, 2013 through the conclusion of Super Bowl operations during the early morning hours of February 4, 2013.

HSI TACCOM Mobile Communications Command Center (MCC) staged adjacent to the New Orleans City Hall, which housed the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during Super Bowl XLVII operations, and next to the Mobile Command Center operated by the Louisiana Governor’s office.

HSI TACCOM Raptor staged at the former US Navy facility in New Orleans, LA providing a full array of communication services to HSI Tactical Teams supporting Super Bowl XLVII Operations.
The CBP Wireless Systems Program Office (WSPO) Tactical Communications (TACCOM) modernization program begins system acceptance testing for its modernization project in the El Paso sector of western Texas and New Mexico in March.

In the Rio Grande Valley sector (southeastern Texas), the construction of a 250-foot National Park Service tower was completed and a review was conducted to assess the logistical support system.

An integration readiness review was approved for the Houlton sector in Maine, meaning the modernized system, facilities, personnel, plans and procedures are ready for integration.

Progress continues on the Digital-In-Place (DIP) project, considered the capstone of the CBP (TACCOM) program and a foundation for the DHS Tactical Communications Interoperability Framework (TIF) to be used by DHS components and partners throughout the law enforcement and public safety communities.

The immediate DIP mission is to replace existing analog radio equipment (radios and infrastructure) with digital equipment, much like the conversion of broadcast television signals from analog to digital.

Some of those analog Land Mobile Radio (LMR) systems in use are more than 20 years old. The digital conversion is needed to ensure equipment and systems comply with federal mandates to more efficiently use increasingly scarce narrowband radio frequency spectrum, and meet the most up-to-date technology security and interoperability standards. Upgrading tactical communications radio systems employed by CBP law enforcement agents and officers to the so-called Project 25 (P25) national standards and increasing the capacity of these radio systems improves CBP agent and officer safety – and public safety.

The CBP TACCOM DIP project sets the baseline configuration, the technical foundation, for the TIF being developed by the JWPMO. The DIP project contributing to the TIF provides a platform for long term evolution (LTE) technology to be developed that no longer is limited to mission critical voice transmissions.

Future generations of technology must meet the growing demand for biometric and other large file data transfers, as well as video and other imaging, plus mobile broadband capabilities.

DIP Objectives:

- Enable secure encryption (Advanced Encryption Standard) for agent and officer safety and to protect sensitive information.
- Facilitate interoperability with other law enforcement and public safety communications systems by converting to the federally mandated Project 25 (P25) narrowband radio frequency spectrum standards.
- Enhance signal quality and technology capabilities by converting to digital equipment.
- Resolve critical reliability problems caused by trying to keep obsolete mission critical systems operational.
- Enable nationwide simplified operations, training, and logistics.
- Provide a common technology baseline as a foundation for future modernization phases.