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11/17/2004 - Chula Vista and Department of Homeland Security Test Break-Through Technology to improve Public Safety

The City of Chula Vista has become a living laboratory for an advanced computer software system that will change the way law enforcement and fire agencies respond to local emergencies and terrorism.

For more than a year, the City and several high tech partners have been developing CommandRESPONSE™, a system that coordinates all types of wireless communication and uses intelligent software to evaluate, analyze and predict where trouble spots exist and help is needed. The system provides unified first responder coordination.

CommandRESPONSE™ was put through its paces today during a simulated terrorist exercise at the Chula Vista Police Department. Observers from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Domestic Preparedness monitored the exercise to assess the system for full-scale rollout in southern California and possible application in cities across the nation.

The project is a collaboration among several of the region's best-known technology companies, government research labs and the City of Chula Vista.

CommandRESPONSE™, an advanced command, control, communication and computing system, has the potential to reinvent the way cities, states, and the nation respond to emergencies and counter threats of terrorism. The system delivers improved information sharing, situational awareness, decision-making and emergency alerting in ways that have never before been possible.

Chula Vista's high technology partners in this groundbreaking project include: SPAWAR Headquarters, SPAWAR Systems Center San Diego, Antin Engineering, TechAlt, Qualcomm, Nextel, Proxim, Intervice, Emergency Email Network, CrossCurrent, CellExchange and CASE Technology.

CommandRESPONSE™ is capable of collecting and analyzing data from thousands of sources via a central location. From that information, the system can identify suspicious patterns and even issue alerts to

subscribing member agencies in advance of a crisis. Beyond that, it also bridges the gap between disparate analog radio and digital communications systems among first responders.

The following types of data are constantly fed into the CommandRESPONSE™ system:

- HAZMAT/Munitions shipment tracking
- Police and Fire computer-aided dispatch events (911 calls)
- Incident management system events
- Consequence assessment data
- Emergency alerts and notifications
- Geographic mapping data
- Weather conditions
- Traffic conditions

The CommandRESPONSE™ system also uses secure broadband wireless capabilities to deliver streaming video from units in the field to responding agency command centers - showing real-time images from the scene.

Today's simulated terrorist strike is a layered attack with several coordinated events designed to test a range of capabilities. It begins with the hijacking of a chlorine tanker truck along Interstate 5 during the busy morning commute. At the same time, a suspicious border crossing is reported by the US Border Patrol, and City of Chula Vista local patrolmen detain a suspicious individual. The scenario continues with a diversionary strike staged as an accident on the trolley tracks at H Street. It ends with an all-out emergency response, including mass public notification when an explosion sends a cloud of poisonous gas into the air. Participants include: Chula Vista Police and Fire agencies, California Highway Patrol, U.S. Border Patrol, HAZMAT, Chula Vista Emergency Services and Public Works Departments, the Naval Research Laboratory and Scripps Hospital.

As the scenario plays out, thousands of pieces of information flow into the CommandRESPONSE™ system. That information is correlated, analyzed and sent to those who need it most. The process is called 'Event Correlation.'

"The correlation capability sifts through real-time information that's fed into the CommandRESPONSE™ system, looking for patterns of activity that warrant attention," explains Pericles Haleftiras, Chief Technology Strategist for Antin Engineering. "The Correlator, in combination with an event notification capability, can automatically inform key administrators and public safety officials that alert levels should be elevated and what kinds of problems could be developing."

If a mass emergency does take place, the CommandRESPONSE™ system will allow for:

- Inter-agency communications for rapid notification and improved coordination of response resources
- Efficient public notification

- Event correlation to dynamically assess, notify and inform key personnel on correlated incidents
- High speed full motion video with telescopic cameras delivered directly to first responders
- Voice interoperability allowing emergency radio systems to communicate with land lines, cell phones, push-to-talk systems and other radio systems in the county

CommandRESPONSE™ is the only system of its kind in the world today. It is a new weapon in the fight against international terrorism.



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