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MISSION CRITICAL PARTNERS TO STUDY FEASIBILITY OF STATEWIDE ESINET

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (September 2, 2014) – Mission Critical Partners, Inc. (MCP) announced that it has been selected to conduct a feasibility study in support of the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA), which is considering the implementation of a statewide Emergency Services Internet Protocol (IP) network (ESInet).

VITA is considering the implementation of an ESInet because it recognizes that there is an opportunity to improve 9-1-1 service delivery within the Commonwealth. With more than 120 primary public safety answering points (PSAPs) in Virginia today, some challenges persist with sharing information between them, due to technical and operational limits that exist when using legacy analog communications systems, according to John Chiaramonte, MCP program manager, who is overseeing the study.

“Currently, Virginia PSAPs have a limited ability to transfer misdirected calls from one PSAP to another,” Chiaramonte said. “Using an ESInet allows PSAPs to share caller information directly and instantaneously.”

Misdirected calls are a big problem for emergency response because they cause unnecessary delays. An ESInet solves this problem because it enables a PSAP to quickly and seamlessly redirect such calls to the appropriate 9-1-1 center, along with all of the caller information, a capability that is missing in today’s 9-1-1 system. In addition, because an ESInet is IP-based, it enables any connected PSAP to automatically reroute all of the emergency calls it receives to another 9-1-1 center—in the next town, in the next county or in the next state. This is an important capability during times when a PSAP has been rendered inoperable or inaccessible due to a natural or manmade disaster.

Finally, because ESInets leverage broadband technology, they enable PSAPs to share data with each other, even bandwidth-intensive files such as video and building floor plans and other drawings that would enhance emergency response. None of this can be accomplished with today’s analog narrowband technology.

The feasibility study will examine all aspects of ESInet deployment, including technological, operational, economic, and political factors. One important factor that will be explored concerns whether the proposed statewide ESInet can leverage regional broadband networks that currently exist, such as those in the National Capital Region and/or those that are operated by research/higher education institutions in the state.

We’ll be looking for anything that will improve efficiencies, and leveraging existing infrastructure is an option,” Chiaramonte said.

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VITA was created by the Virginia General Assembly in 2003 to serve as the state’s consolidated IT organization. For more than a decade since then the agency has led IT advancements across the state in a variety of disciplines, including public safety. Among its many successes was a project coordinated by its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) group four years ago—working in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey (GIS)—to map the coast of Virginia’s Tidewater region. The map is being used to support hurricane storm surge modeling, which in turn aids in disaster response planning.

VITA decided to work with MCP not only because it is the leading public safety communications consultancy, but specifically because the firm has ample experience with projects of similar scope and size, according to Walt Kaplan, MCP program manager. Indeed, MCP’s experience is formidable, as the firm is supporting the implementation of ESInets in eight states.

“VITA mentioned that they looked into the work that we’ve done in other states and that played into their decision process, as did the quality of our staff,” Kaplan said. “They felt that MCP was the leader in this arena and that’s what they wanted, and not just for this initial project—they were looking for a partner that they could count on for sage advice as the ESInet moves forward.”

It should come as no surprise that VITA was impressed with the quality of the team that will work on its feasibility study, said Kevin Murray, MCP’s president and cofounder.

“We have made it a point to recruit and hire our industry’s top talent, and it is gratifying that VITA has taken notice,” Murray said. “The talents and experience of those who will support VITA is particularly important for this project because of its relatively short turnaround time. The feasibility study is due by the end of the year, and VITA recognized that it was going to take a unique group of highly skilled, highly motivated people to pull it together in that short amount of time and still deliver a high-quality report.”

About Mission Critical Partners (MCP)

MCP provides innovative consulting to clients with life safety communications missions throughout North America. With a professional staff of more than 70 employees, the MCP team includes former public safety managers, Project Management Professionals (PMPs), Emergency Number Professionals (ENPs), and technology, forensic and policy specialists. MCP’s services include Executive Consulting/Master Planning; Emergency Management Communications; Next Generation 9-1-1 Planning and Implementation; Land Mobile Radio; Facility/Technology Integration; Broadband Deployment; Consolidation Services; and Forensics/Systems Analysis. Additional information and career opportunities are available at www.mcp911.com.

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