



IT Program Assessment CBP – Integrated Fixed Towers (IFT)

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) conducted a review of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Integrated Fixed Towers (IFT) program. This assessment represents the program's status through March 2012.

Description and Background:

The IFT program is intended to “provide automated, persistent wide area surveillance for the detection, tracking, identification, and classification of illegal border incursions between ports of entry.” It is an outgrowth of the Secure Border Initiative network (SBI net) program that was cancelled in January 2011 due to cost overruns and schedule delays. The IFT program is leveraging the lessons learned from SBI net, specifically by pursuing a non-developmental system procurement approach and opting for a fixed-price contract.

The IFT program was the subject of an Investment Review Board (IRB) held on January 25, 2012. The Acquisition Decision Memorandum (ADM) will approve the following program next steps:

- Approve the release of the Request For Proposal (RFP)
- Contract award
- Deployment of the IFT capability in up to six Arizona Border Patrol Areas of Responsibility (AOR)

Risks and Issues:

Challenges remain concerning locating and maintaining in-place towers and associated surveillance technologies. The risks identified by the program are as follows:

- If new tower sites are selected for IFT (i.e., moved away from sites selected as part of SBI net), then the resulting environmental review process may impact schedule
- If land is needed to support tower construction, then the land acquisition process may impact schedule
- If the correct mix of staffing/skills is not available to support the project, then quality and timeliness of work will suffer, resulting in impacts to cost and schedule

Mitigation Strategy:

The program has mitigation strategies in place to address the three risks identified above. These are:

- Leverage site selection and environmental work done as part of the SBI net program, conduct site-specific environmental analysis in parallel to source selection, and conduct early coordination with the Department of the Interior and other environmental stakeholders



- Leverage real estate work done as part of the SBInet program and ensure close coordination with the environmental review process
- Determine deployment management staffing needs and augment the existing Southwest field office

Assessment:

The CBP IFT program has garnered valuable lessons learned from the cancelled SBInet effort. They have abandoned developing a “one size fits all” solution in favor of procuring commercially available technologies, have opted for a firm fixed-price vehicle, and have taken the added step of specifying that respondents to the RFP demonstrate the performance of their proposed system during the source selection process. They are also being proactive in finalizing the sensor site locations and ensuring the environmental reviews and approvals are completed prior to contract award. The CBP IFT program has taken many positive steps that should provide a firm foundation for successfully delivering the needed capability; however, a better indication of the direction the program is taking will come after the RFP is released and the contract is awarded. Therefore, at this time, the CIO assesses the CBP IFT program as **Medium Risk**.

Score: 3