

IT Program Assessment

CBP - Tactical Communications (TACCOM-2)

Review

The DHS CIO conducted a comprehensive program review of the new CBP Tactical Communications (TACCOM 2) program during September 2011. This review is an early look at a program formulating its implementation of mobile voice communications for all of DHS and its partners. TACCOM 2 plans to employ a new 700MHz broadband public safety frequency allocation for achieving much better and cheaper voice, data, and video communications among DHS Components, state and local public safety organizations, and other emergency responders.

Program Review observations include the following:

An Acquisition Review Board (ARB) was held on March 31, 2011 to review Customs and Border Protection's Next Generation Tactical Communications program. A draft Acquisition Decision Memorandum was published summarizing the result of the ARB Decisions including:

- Approval of the Acquisition Decision Event 1 (ADE-1) to establish the Next Generation Tactical Communications Program as a joint DHS-level program
- Authorized the program to enter the early life cycle, Analyze/Select Phase
- Approval of the Capability Development Plan (CDP) and the CBP Mission Need Statement (MNS) to guide the program until approval of a Department-wide MNS
- Authorized the establishment of a Joint Program Office (JPO) and its oversight, guidance and governance body, the Executive Steering Committee (ESC). The ESC and JPO will include representatives from appropriate stakeholders

The CBP JPO has developed an Inter Agency Agreement (IAA) of \$10M for a Technology Demonstrator Broad Agency Announcement, which was approved at the ADE-1 ARB, but subject to approval by the IT Acquisition Review process. An associated Statement of Work has been developed for a fiscal year 2012 procurement action. The advisability of performing a technology demonstration without all requirements defined was discussed at a September Enterprise Architecture meeting.

The TACCOM 2 program faces some risks, such as:

- If the status and rights of Federal user access to the 700 MHz spectrum is not determined, then the TACCOM-2 program goals will be delayed until resolved.
- If the lifecycle cost estimate (LCCE) and business models for the National Public Safety Broadband Network and shared infrastructure are not defined, then the program goals may be delayed accordingly.

Mitigation Strategy

The TACCOM 2 program plans to mitigate the identified risks by continuing to use the existing spectrum for voice and leverage alternate commercial services for data and video as secondary sources, as needed.

It will also continue to track developments and business models from public safety agencies and update the LCCE and business models accordingly

Assessment

TACCOM 2 is a new program that is starting with the appropriate goals, objectives, and initial planning. The program is establishing proper governance and oversight by establishing an ESC and a JPO. However, the program complexity will be high as its success will rely greatly on coordination and agreement amongst a large number of TACCOM-2 stakeholders including 18 DHS Components or HQs organizations. The use of a technology demonstration program to illustrate the capabilities of broadband while defining user requirements is of concern to some DHS stakeholders. Although the program is proceeding as planned, the CIO will continue to monitor this program to ensure that it continues along a path to quality program management and success and so that fundamental program technical and management risks can be resolved as early as possible. The CIO assesses the CBP TACCOM 2 program as Level 3 - Medium Risk.

Score: 3