

## **IT Program Assessment NPPD - NS/EP Priority Telecommunications Services (PTS)**

### **Review**

The DHS CIO conducted a comprehensive program review of the NPPD - NS/EP PTS in September 2011. Program observations include the following:

Priority Telecommunications Service (PTS) is a White House directed National-Level National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Telecommunications Program that leverages the commercially owned Public Switched Network (PSN). The leveraging of the PSN provides specially designed telecommunications services for the NS/EP user community during natural or man-made disasters when conventional communications services are ineffective. These telecommunication services are used to coordinate response and recovery efforts and, if needed, to assist with facilitating Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG). The PTS investment owns no IT technical infrastructure and no capabilities are housed in DHS data centers or reside on DHS networks. All capabilities are implemented in the commercial telecommunications networks wholly owned and operated by commercial service providers.

The following are risks to the NS/EP PTS program:

- Currently there is no agreement in place for funding to support infrastructure development—which will lead to degradation of NS/EP PTS service.
- O&M costs have remained stable over time, however, expiring 10-year leases will be negotiated with the new contracts which are expected to increase costs beyond projected budget in FYHSP.
- Wireless Priority Service (WPS) signaling overload in current cellular network configuration causing signaling congestion during extreme congestion events, yielding a lower probability of call completion for WPS calls. In a WPS performance report, real-time data is not currently available for WPS. WPS is not meeting performance requirements due to cost risk that insufficient funds available to improve the Wireless Priority Service.

### **Mitigation**

NPPD's mitigation strategy to NS/EP PTS high level funding risk to service degradation, is to continue requesting funds for infrastructure development. To ensure success for leasing agreements NS/EP PTS has identified that if they receive a step-level budgeting increase of \$5M (estimated) beginning in FY2014 it will mitigate the cost risk. NPPD's

mitigation strategy to NS/EP PTS high level technical risk of signaling overload in current cellular network is to continue requesting funds for infrastructure development.

### **Assessment**

The NS/EP PTS operations are well managed and continue to meet its mission requirements. NS/EP PTS performance for (GETS) and Special Routing Arrangement Service (SRAS) remains positive; cost, schedule, and performance variances are within 5% of plan. The main risk to the program is funding risk for further development of the NS/EP PTS network. Executive leadership continues to espouse support for the program, but expiring leases and funding resources in the program budget line require continued monitoring of this program. The CIO assesses the NPPD NS-EP PTS program as a Level 3 - Medium Risk.

**Score: 3**