



IT Program Assessment NPPD – NS/EP Priority Telecom Services (PTS)

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) conducted a program review of the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Priority Telecom Services (PTS) program in March 2012.

Description and Background:

PTS is a White House directed National-Level National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Program that leverages the commercially owned Public Switched Network (PSN). 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). This program enhances the completion of calls during national crisis through specialized networks for the President, Congress, Federal, state, and local governments, and other authorized users. All capabilities are implemented in the commercial telecommunications networks, wholly owned and operated by commercial service providers.

Risks and Issues:

- Risk of low Wireless Priority Service (WPS) call completion yield due to signaling overload in current cellular network configuration caused data congestion during extreme emergency events.
- Risk of overall PTS service degradation due to network evolution.

Mitigation Strategy:

- NPPD's mitigation strategy to resolve the WPS performance issue during emergency events is to request additional funding for infrastructure development
- To mitigate the PTS service degradation due to network evolution, the program will track industry standards and analyze technology gaps for future planning and upgrade requirements.

Assessment:

The National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Priority Telecom Services (PTS) program is tracking on schedule, budget, and performance goals within 10% of plan. The primary risk for the NS/EP PTS program is funding for technology refresh and maintenance. The program should plan to re-prioritize goals in the event of funding cuts to ensure core requirements are met. Executive leadership continues to support the NS/EP PTS program; however, funding risks to the budget require continued monitoring. The CIO assesses the NPPD NS/EP PTS program as a **Medium Risk** investment.

Score: 3