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Office of Grants and Training

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Tampa Bay Technology Demonstration Program

Acknowledgements

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Support from a large number of sponsors, partners, jurisdictions, and agencies made the Phase 1 demonstration of the Tampa Bay Technology Demonstration Program a tremendous success.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) owes a special thanks to three Tampa Police Department officials: Chief Stephen Hogue, Assistant Chief Jane Castor, and Major John Bennett. Chief Castor serves as the Tampa Police Department representative and chair of the Tampa Bay Region UASI Working Group.

PARTICIPATING JURISDICTIONS AND AGENCIES

City of Clearwater, FL

- City of Clearwater Police Department
- City of Clearwater Fire and Rescue
- City of Clearwater Emergency Management
- City of Clearwater Police Department
- City of Clearwater Information Technology

Hillsborough County, FL

- Hillsborough County Fire and Rescue
- Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
- Hillsborough County Emergency Management
- Hillsborough County Information Technology

Pinellas County, FL

- Pinellas County Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
- Pinellas County Emergency Management

City of St. Petersburg, FL

- City of St. Petersburg Police Department
- City of St. Petersburg Fire and Rescue
- City of St. Petersburg Information Technology

City of Tampa, FL

- City of Tampa Police Department
- City of Tampa Fire and Rescue and Medical Director
- City of Tampa Information Technology

Tools Link Up to Form Safety Net

Security is Focus in Bay Area

By Valerie Kalfrin
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TAMPA - From a helicopter cockpit, Tampa police Flight Officer Todd Curabba can plot his route to any address in four states and estimate his travel time.

The mapping system is one of four domestic-security tools that link Tampa police with police in Clearwater and St. Petersburg, as well as sheriff's offices in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties. Used simultaneously during the Gasparilla Parade, the technology strengthens the area's response to daily emergencies, possible terrorist attacks and natural disasters.

"It's really impressive," said Kerry Thomas, director of national preparedness programs within the Department of Homeland Security's office of grants and training. "The promise of being able to roll that out on a regional basis puts the Tampa Bay area ahead in a lot of ways."

The Tampa Bay area is the only one nationwide using all four technologies, purchased since fiscal year 2003 using some of the $22.6 million in federal money distributed to the region, said Tampa's assistant chief of police, Jane Castor.

Officials do not know how much federal money the area will receive this year, Castor said. A key concern is enabling local emergency responders to communicate on the same radio frequency, she said.

On Tuesday, officials described how the technologies used during Gasparilla can help anticipate problems and position personnel more effectively:

• Avalex has more than electronic maps. It allows pilots to transmit images to terminals on the ground, direct travel routes and mark places for investigators where suspects abandon weapons. In hurricane-ravaged areas, Avalex can show aid workers detailed maps of Florida, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, as well as aerial photographs and live camera images. "If a building has been demolished, ... I can direct resources based on what this used to look like," Curabba said.

• E-Sponder, an electronic incident-management system, tracks assigned tasks and available resources. Before the end of the Gasparilla Parade, it calculated the number of arrests and tracked time spent on duties such as closing roads and redirecting traffic.

• Coplink scans documents such as crash reports and incident reports, searching for common threads to generate investigative leads. Using Coplink, a Hillsborough County narcotics detective once identified a suspect by inputting a basic description of a white man with a distinctive tattoo on his stomach.

• Site Profiler uses three-dimensional graphics to assess weaknesses in infrastructure. For example, if the Department of Homeland Security issued a warning about banks, the program could locate all local banks and determine the most vulnerable. *Reporter Valerie Kalfrin can be reached at (813) 259 7800.*