



U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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USTDA GRANT PROMOTES ICT NETWORK EXPANSION IN RURAL CHINA

YORBA LINDA, CALIFORNIA (September 16, 2008) – Supporting China’s efforts to expand broadband Internet service in rural areas is the focus of a USTDA grant awarded today to the Academy of Broadcasting Science (ABS), a technical institute under the State Administration for Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT). The \$593,398 grant was awarded at the 19th Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT) meeting taking place at the Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library in Yorba Linda, California.

USTDA is participating in the JCCT meeting as part of the U.S. delegation led by Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez and U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab. USTDA Director for Policy and Program Geoffrey Jackson and Vice Minister of Commerce Ma Xiuhong signed on behalf of the U.S. and Chinese Governments, respectively. Secretary Gutierrez, Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Ambassador Schwab, Chinese Ambassador to the United States Zhou Wenzhong, and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ed Shafer were present at the grant signing.

China has stressed the importance of information and communications technology (ICT) in its overall economic development and prioritized investments in ICT infrastructure in rural areas. Deployment of broadband networks, in order to provide services such as cable television, telephone and internet access, represents a significant component of these plans. ABS has conducted research on the most cost-effective and technically advantageous methods for deploying such a network, and recently decided to examine more closely the potential for Local Multipoint Distribution Service (LMDS) technology.

The USTDA grant will assist ABS in assessing the technology options for its “Direct to Home Rural Coverage” project, and provide the economic and financial analysis needed for the project to move forward. The study will also include a pilot demonstration of one network option in an area covering at least ten villages. ABS hopes to confirm LMDS capabilities with this study and pilot demonstration.

ABS has selected MediaG3, Inc., of San Jose, California, to conduct the study. In addition to the USTDA grant, both MediaG3 and ABS will provide additional resources toward the completion of the study.

(More)

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, early investment analysis, training, orientation visits and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance funds to support sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and sustainable economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services.

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