



Homeland
Security

Press Release

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DHS LAUNCHES MULTI-BAND RADIO PROJECT *Improves communications among emergency response agencies*

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Science and Technology Directorate announced today a contract award of \$6.275 million to Thales Communications, Inc. to demonstrate the first-ever portable radio prototype allowing emergency responders—police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service personnel—to communicate with partner agencies regardless of radio band. Equal in cost, size, and weight to existing portable radios, the multi-band radio will provide emergency responders with cutting-edge communications capabilities.

Effective radio communications are critical to the success of a coordinated emergency response. To support emergency response radio communications, the Federal Communications Commission has reserved radio spectrum within several different frequency bands for public safety use. Today, a radio is developed to operate within a specific frequency band—with no one radio able to tune to channels within every public safety frequency band. Consequently, emergency response agencies and support units (e.g., Federal Emergency Management Agency, Coast Guard, National Guard) that operate in different radio frequency bands often cannot communicate with each other. The multi-band radio project addresses this capability gap by demonstrating a single radio that operates on all public safety radio bands.

“We are committed to identifying innovative technologies aligned with the communications needs of first responders,” said Dr. David Boyd, Director of S&T’s Command, Control and Interoperability (CCI) Division. “By enabling seamless radio communications among multiple agencies, the multi-band radio project represents a significant milestone in overcoming the communications challenges our nation’s emergency responders face during large-scale disasters.”

The contract has a performance period of 12 months, and CCI will manage the multi-band radio demonstration to determine how well the technology meets the critical needs of frontline emergency responders.

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Through a practitioner-driven approach, the Science and Technology Directorate’s Command, Control and Interoperability (CCI) Division creates and deploys information resources—standards, frameworks, tools, and technologies—to enable seamless and secure interactions among homeland security stakeholders. With its federal partners, CCI is working to strengthen capabilities to communicate, share, visualize, analyze, and protect information.