

Emergency Support Systems (ESS) Consortium Receives EU Approval to Commence Research and Development

ESS to Serve as a Framework for Future Crisis Event Management

22nd July, 2009, APD Communications - The Emergency Support System (ESS) Consortium today announced that it has received formal approval from the European Commission to begin research and development of a portable emergency command and control system that incorporates real-time data collection technologies. The system will provide actionable intelligence to managers during crisis events and will be used as a framework for future crisis management systems.

Part of the Seventh EU Framework Program, ESS is a four year project which is expected to run until 2013. The European Commission will contribute €9.1 million over the next 4 years. The ESS consortium, which is led by Verint Systems, is comprised of 19 leading European technology companies, research institutes and end- user organisations.

The purpose of ESS is to enable improved control and management of major crisis events such as terror attacks, industrial accidents, natural disasters etc. The idea guiding the development of ESS is real-time fusion of various forms of field-derived data including video, audio, weather, location tracking, radioactivity, bio-chemical, telecom derived data, affected population reports and other information. The data would be communicated via both portable and fixed platforms including wireless communication devices, UAV, air-balloon and field-vehicles. The fusion of the data is handled within a central system which performs information analysis and provides decision support applications for web based command and control systems. This provides flexible, yet comprehensive coverage of the affected area.

Once available to the market, the ESS concept would offer real time synchronisation and information sharing between first responders and support forces at the site of the incident such as police, rescue teams and firefighters as well as out-of-theatre command and control centres of the various involved authorities (e.g. municipalities and homeland security). ESS will also enable the commanders to communicate with the affected on-site personnel by sending text (SMS) or recorded voice messages.

"We are proud to advance our innovative concept in the field of civil security through partnership with world-leading industrial and research organisations," says Gideon Hazzani, Director of Technologies for Verint Systems, who initiated the ESS concept and serves as the consortium coordinator.

"Crisis situations are usually characterised by random location, uncertainty, stress and the availability of partial information according to which commanders need to make life and death decisions. By using independent, portable and quickly deployable command and control systems which share information between all the parties, decision makers can make decisions based on better quality, clearer and more complete data. As such, ESS will help limit the scope of the crisis and ultimately save lives," explains Hazzani. Elie Berdugo, the EMEA FP7 coordinator at Ernst & Young adds "The start of the ESS project is a great achievement for the ESS consortium. The European FP7 platform offers a unique opportunity to develop advanced concepts such as those included in ESS".

"As a proud member of the ESS we applaud the European Commission's decision to begin work on a portable emergency command and control system. We have worked with public and private organisations throughout the world to improve the service their control room solutions provide by seamlessly merging radio dispatch, telephone call handling, video monitoring and web services into a powerful, networked communications tool. We look forward to bringing these benefits to this project," said Steve Denison, Managing Director of APD Communications.

About the ESS Consortium

The ESS consortium consists of 19 European partners that come together from a wide spectrum of operational, industrial and academic fields, ranging from sensor design, electronic communications, security applications and civil protection. The members of the consortium include: VERINT Systems (Israel)- the consortium coordinator, Ernst & Young (Israel), Centre d'Essais et de Recherche de l'Entente (France), Fraunhofer IAIS (Germany), CS (France), GMV (Spain), Intergraph (Czech Republic), Alcatel-Lucent (Italy), Algosystems (Greece), ITIS (UK), IMEGO institute (Sweden), KEMEA-center for security studies (Greece), FAENZI (Italy), ANCO (Greece), APD Communications (UK), International Geospatial Services Institute (Germany), Magen-David Adom (Israel), Aeronautics (Israel), Wind Telecommunication (Italy). For more information please contact info@essproject.com

About APD Communications

With over 24 years of experience APD is a global leader in mobile information, resource location/tracking and control room solutions. APD specialises in delivering mission-critical and business-critical solutions to organisations within the public sector, transport, security, logistics and the emergency services. APD's products are used in over 90 client sites in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Customers including 80 per cent of police forces in the United Kingdom (including The Metropolitan Police Service, Merseyside Police), the Abu Dhabi Police force, Newcastle City Council, the STS Romania and leading organisations such as Balfour Beatty Infrastructure Services, May Gurney, DB Schenker. For more information please visit: www.apdcomms.com

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