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TESTIMONY
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING THREATS AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT, CHAIRMAN
September 29, 2003, 2:00PM
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2154

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, Subcommittee staff, I am Dr. David F. Bolka, Director of the Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency (HSARPA). I am pleased to appear before you this afternoon to discuss our relationship with the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG).

Your letter asked several questions about this relationship. I trust my testimony, in combination with that of Mr. McCallum and Mr. Jakub, addresses all of them.

As you know, HSARPA was created by the Homeland Security Act of 2002. Our responsibilities specified in the Act are described as follows:

The Director shall administer the Fund to award competitive, merit-reviewed grants, cooperative agreements or contracts to public or private entities, including businesses, federally funded research and development centers, and universities.

The Director shall administer the Fund to--

(A) support basic and applied homeland security research to promote

revolutionary changes in technologies that would promote homeland security;

(B) advance the development, testing and evaluation, and deployment of

critical homeland security technologies; and

(C) accelerate the prototyping and deployment of technologies that would address homeland security vulnerabilities.

The third part of our mission is rapid prototyping. This is one area where our mission and that of the TSWG overlap somewhat. Many of our user agencies have worked with TSWG in the past and continue to do so. Mr. McCallum has described some of the technology TSWG has brought forward for them. I do not see this overlap in rapid prototyping responsibilities as either debilitating or wasteful. There is sufficient work for all of us in developing technologies that strengthen our security.

As Mr. McCallum described, in 2003, while HSARPA was being organized and beginning to hire staff, we provided funds for a combined DHS/TSWG Broad Area Announcement (BAA) that was issued on May 14, 2003. This BAA listed fifty-one top priority research and technology needs that we share with TSWG. The DHS S&T staff have participated in working groups with TSWG and helped evaluate many of the quad charts and white papers that were submitted in response. We also participate in evaluating the proposals that result from this solicitation.

DHS (S&T) is represented on the TSWG Executive Committee by my Deputy Director, Dr. Jane A. Alexander, and in several working groups by S&T staff.

Last Tuesday, HSARPA issued its first Research Announcement for Detection Systems for Biological and Chemical Countermeasures. This announcement begins our work on the next generation of biological and chemical sensors and systems. The Research Announcement solicits white papers, leading to proposals from Industry, academia and laboratories in five Technical Topic Areas – two biological and three chemical. We are using TSWG's established BAA Information Delivery System to publish the research announcement, to electronically register those who respond, to collect their white papers, and to distribute them to technical reviewers in HSARPA. This morning, HSARPA held a Bidders' Conference here in Washington to provide detailed information to potential bidders.

We have an approved staffing plan that will see HSARPA staffed to 50% of authorized scientific and technical headcount early in 2004, reaching nearly 100% by late summer. We receive legal, security, facilities, and administrative support from our DHS Management Directorate; our first contracting officer is assigned.

As HSARPA develops its own capability to solicit the country's best technical ideas, concepts, technologies and systems, we will rely less on the TSWG infrastructure and more on our own. It is worth noting that HSARPA's development involves not only creating the ability to solicit and evaluate, but the simultaneous capability to execute high quality research and development programs as we proceed.

For FY-04, about 10% of the HSARPA budget will be expended in rapid prototyping. We expect TSWG will perform this function for us for the near term. In his statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security last April 10th, DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology, Dr. Charles McQueary, said that the Science and Technology Directorate would establish a partnership with the Technical Support Working Group. To implement that partnership, DHS requested \$30M in FY04 to solicit near-term capabilities that can be rapidly prototyped and fielded. The Congress has increased this funding to \$75M in the FY04 Appropriation.

As HSARPA matures, and the Systems Engineering and Development branch of the S&T Directorate stands up, we will assume the majority of the rapid prototyping

responsibility and will coordinate it internally with our S&T developments. We will continue to fund TSWG to perform rapid prototyping work when it is mutually beneficial. Over the next few months we will continue to refine and will document our working relationships with TSWG.

Our intent is to fulfill the clear intent of the establishing legislation and execute the full scope of HSARPA functions as rapidly as staff and facilities can be assembled. It is our view that the TSWG experience and facilities can help us achieve that goal in the near term. Under any foreseeable circumstances we will retain our position on the TSWG Executive Board to collaborate, share information, join in mutually interesting developments, avoid unnecessary development duplication, and derive mutual benefit from our continuing association.

Subject to any questions you may have, Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony.