USCG and NAIS core data exchange capability

On 22nd December 2008 the US Coast Guard’s Acquisition Directorate announced the award of a contract to Northrop Grumman Space & Mission Systems Corporation to deliver the core Nationwide Automatic Identification System data exchange capability.

Under the contract, valued at about $12 million, Northrop Grumman will provide the necessary shore-side communications, network and processing capability to ensure the effective exchange of Automatic Identification System information between AIS-equipped vessels, aircraft, aids to navigation and shore stations within all major US ports, waterways and coastal zones as well as from AIS-equipped vessels bound for the United States.

The core data exchange capability consists of all the system components and functionality, including AIS receive and transmit messaging, data processing, data storage and retrieval and system monitoring, on a limited geographic scale. AIS is an internationally adopted communication system to provide for autonomous, continuous exchange of vessel positions and other navigation safety related information.

“The Nationwide AIS project is already making critical contributions to maritime safety and security at our nation’s highest priority ports and coastal zones,” said Rear-Admiral Gary T Blore, Assistant Commandant for Acquisitions. He added, “This contract will allow the Coast Guard to fully leverage the inherent features of AIS by adding transmit capabilities to our nationwide system, which will provide a considerable enhancement to safety of navigation and the marine transportation system.”

The United States Coast Guard solicited for this work under a full and open competition, following a disciplined process to award the contract from a robust pool of offerors. Northrop Grumman was selected because the firm offered the best value of technical capability, management approach and price.

The contract provides for a two-year base period and six, one-year option periods. In addition to the core data exchange capabilities Northrop Grumman will, it is understood, deliver transmit and expanded receive coverage for Coast Guard Sectors Delaware Bay, Philadelphia; Hampton Roads, Virginia; and Mobile, Alabama, during the base period.
Northrop Grumman’s Command and Control Systems Division, headquartered at Herndon, Virginia, will perform the work at Newport News, Virginia, and Carson, California, as well as at each of the three initial Coast Guard sectors and their surrounding areas.

The contract option periods include optional tasks to provide surveys and equipment in support of the US Government’s implementation of transmit and expanded-receive coverage for the remaining Coast Guard sectors. The approximate total value of this contract, if all options are exercised, is approximately $68 million.

“I am looking forward to working with Northrop Grumman to successfully deliver this important new capability,” said Commander James K. Ingalsbe, NAIS Deputy Project Manager. “The first increment of NAIS provided the Coast Guard valuable capability to build maritime domain awareness. The award of this contract will allow the Coast Guard to begin using all the capabilities of AIS in support of all Coast Guard missions, and in providing services to mariners to enhance their safety, security, and efficiency.”

The Coast Guard’s Acquisition Directorate is responsible for a $27 billion investment portfolio that includes more than 20 major projects. The Coast Guard’s investment in modernization and recapitalization ensures that the operational force has the equipment necessary to remain the lead agency in maritime safety, security and natural resources stewardship.

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