

Harris Corporation protests Radio Project in Nashville/Davidson County

Posted At : April 16, 2010 11:03 AM | Posted By : Evan Halperin

Related Categories: Justice/Public Safety & Homeland Security, State & Local, Procurement, Protest

Last month, the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County **issued an RFP** for a new 800 MHz Trunked Simulcast Public Safety Radio System. After just three weeks of the RFP being on the street, Harris Corporation lodged a formal protest to the Metropolitan Government. Harris Corp. cited that while the RFP intends to solicit a system that is not proprietary or restricted to a single manufacturer, the terms of the RFP make it impossible for Harris Corp (or other manufacturers) to submit a bid for the public safety system. Harris requested a change in the RFP language or a cancelation of the solicitation.

The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County acknowledged the protest and while they did review the complaint, there has not been any amendments issued to cite changed in the RFP document. What makes this situation interesting is the idea that there may be numerous RFPs issued across the country that are intended as to solicit vendor competition, while at the same time, requesting specifications that single out a particular vendor.

Each city, county and state has different regulations for their solicitation process, often allowing for a single sole sourced purchase, which may be in the best interest of that locality. In other cases however, localities may be benefited by reviewing bids from various vendors who may offer different products that could be a potential fit.

Most vendors would argue that fully open and competitive solicitations give them the best opportunity to showcase their products quality and cost effectiveness. However, I think that vendors would obviously rather see themselves picked as the sole source vendor. For purchasing offices, it is a difficult line to walk, in the interest of their locality, their citizens and the vendor community.