

The Other JIE: Engineering the Mission Partner Environment

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All eyes are currently focused on the Department of Defense's efforts to engineer a Joint Information Environment that will enable the secure sharing of information across the DoD enterprise, as well as the delivery of enterprise services by both the Defense Information Systems Agency and, eventually, commercial cloud partners. There is another network integration effort going at DISA, however, which receives significantly less attention, yet its importance to the future of U.S. national security is every bit as critical. That effort is the transformation of the Multinational Information Sharing portfolio of programs into a new Mission Partner Environment.

The current MNIS portfolio consists of four capabilities:

- The Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange System (CENTRIXS), which includes the Common Mission Network Transport (CMNT) backbone that enables the management of federated networks and provides common transport for encrypted traffic between mission partners.
- The Pegasus System, which interconnects the National Command and Control systems of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States using cross domain solutions.
- The Combined Federated Battle Laboratory Network (CFBLNet), which provides a controlled Research, Development, Trials, and Assessment coalition information sharing sandbox for evaluating new technologies and developing new tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).
- The Unclassified Information Sharing Service (UISS) All Partners Access (APAN) Network, which provides information sharing capabilities to mission partners, U.S. Combatant Commands, U.S. Government agencies, host nations, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and coalition partners.

Support services for these pieces of the MNIS are currently provided under a variety of contracts held by Harris (Cross Domain Solutions), CACI (Cross Domain Solutions), Raytheon (Engineering Support), Ingenium (Program Support), SAIC (Program Support), ViaSat (Cryptographic HW), Information Analysis (Connection Approval Process), and MCP Computer Products (DNS Management).

When engineering work is complete, the component parts of the MNIS will be merged into a single Mission Partner Environment that provides interoperable email, chat, video conferencing, VoIP, and other collaboration capabilities. The MPE will also connect to the Joint Information Environment, providing access to data located throughout the Defense enterprise.



The projected Research, Development, Testing, and Enhancement (RDT&E) budget for work related to the MNIS totals \$31.1 million over five years (FY 2015-2020), averaging approximately \$6.2 million per year.

One piece of the puzzle not mentioned so far is the U.S. Battlefield Information Collection and Exploitation System – Extended (US BICES-X), which will also be part of the new MPE. Budget data for US BICES-X was classified for FY 2015, so no numbers can be provided for it here. Investigating BICES-X for potential future business opportunity should be on industry's radar, however, as there may be requirements at Hill Air Force Base for cryptographic HW, engineering a VTC network, and integrating Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance components from the Distributed Common Ground System and Defense Intelligence Information Enterprise. Requirements for program office support and technical integration support may also be available, if these haven't been awarded already.

Lastly, commercial cloud providers take note. DISA intends to host the UISS-APAN system in a commercial cloud environment in FY 2016. UISS-APAN is currently hosted in DISA's Enterprise Service Center, part of its Defense Enterprise Computing Center, in Montgomery, Alabama. Supporting vendors include Carahsoft, Exalt Integrated Technologies, Alvarez & Associates, and DLT Solutions, which provide Software and Documentation Localization licenses, DocAve software, Google Maps, and Google Translation software and support, respectively. DISA intends to migrate UISS-APAN to a vendor-hosted Infrastructure-as-a-Service environment, meaning that if the procurement appears soon, there are but a few competitors certified by the DoD to provide hosting services.

