

New York County moves to privatize its public safety systems: Is this the start of a new trend?

Posted At : August 28, 2009 10:01 AM | Posted By : Evan Halperin

Related Categories: Technology Trends, Justice/Public Safety & Homeland Security, State & Local, Contract Opportunities, Procurement

Monroe County New York is in the final **stages of an agreement** with Navitech to completely manage its public safety and security systems. The contract would be for twenty years and cost \$11.2 million annually. As this contract moves closer to fruition, one may wonder if this is a good thing for the County or something disturbing that may become more common in the public safety sector.

One of the major facets of state and local public safety projects, from Computer Aided Dispatch to County-wide radio systems, is the need for constant competition. Long term contracts may be common place in some of these areas, but locking up long term deals of twenty years might actually have a detrimental effect on the cities and counties themselves.

Locking up these deals prevents the City from reevaluating the system and the vendors themselves, every few years, really is doing them a disservice. Being able to determine that the software or hardware is not a good fit enables a city or county to re-bid and allow for a new competitive bid process.

Overall, projects like that in Monroe County will be disadvantageous to cities, counties and vendors alike. While these types of deals may give the locality the option to upgrade systems or equipment on a regular basis, it is essential that state and local governments continue to allow continuous competitive bids for services in the public safety sector.