

Net New Development Dollars in Transportation's FY 2015 Budget Request

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Over the last few weeks I've been posting analyses of development funding in the FY 2015 president's IT budget request for the Army and Defense Agencies. This week the focus shifts to the civilian sector and net new IT development, modernization, and enhancement (DME) funding in the FY 2015 request for the Department of Transportation.

As a reminder, I have been defining "net new" DME funding the last few weeks as DME dollars slated in FY 2015 for programs that received zero total dollars in FY 2014. According to that definition the DOT's IT budget contains \$14 million net new IT dollars in FY 2015. These dollars are split evenly at \$7 million apiece between two agencies in the DOT – the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The table below shows a breakdown of the numbers by project.

Agency - Project	FY 2015 DME (\$M)
PHMSA - National Pipeline Information Exchange (NPIX)	\$6
PHMSA - Pipeline Hotline and Online Reporting Tool (PHORT)	\$1
FAA - Energy Management Compliance (EMC)	\$3
FAA - Tower Simulation System (TSS) Tech Refresh	\$3
FAA - Seismic Safety Risk Mitigation	\$1

Source: OMB

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

The largest of these programs is the PHMSA's **National Pipeline Information Exchange**, a database intended to "collect and standardize state and external agency data, such as unregulated miles [of pipeline], inspection results, enforcement, Safety-Related Condition Reports, and incident investigation on operators so it can be integrated with the PHMSA's data and shared with state partners." NPIX was first proposed in FY 2012, but it has received no funding to date. The PHMSA will therefore try again to secure funding for creation of the database in FY 2015. Should it receive that funding, work planned for NPIX will begin with a pilot effort to collect data from 5 States (25 data sources) and organize it according to National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) standards to enable sharing with partners. The success of the pilot will determine the viability of NPIX going forward.

The **Pipeline Hotline and Online Reporting Tool** is part of NPIX and is intended to be a whistleblower hotline for the collection of complaints and "near miss reports that feeds NPIX to drive inspections and avert potential disasters. Presumably any procurement that appears for NPIX will also contain a requirement for PHORT. This may not be the case, however, given that the initial stage of NPIX will be a pilot effort so interested vendors should keep an eye out for market research for both NPIX and PHORT. I'm also thinking these requirements sound like perfect projects for a small business, so look for a possible set-aside opportunity.

The Federal Aviation Administration

The three projects listed for the FAA look less promising, truth be told. There is also limited information available about each.

Energy Management Compliance is related to the installation of advanced energy meters (i.e., Smart Meters) at Air Traffic Organization facilities to track electricity usage in compliance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. If this effort is contracted, it too sounds like a good project for a small business to complete.

The **Tower Simulation System** tech refresh is the only one of these projects for which background information is available. Adacel Systems has been providing support for the TSS since 2007 under contract number DTFAWA08D00002 and in 2013 Adacel was awarded a follow-on contract (DTFAWA13D00013) for TSS support. My guess is that the requested \$3 million in FY 2015 tech refresh dollars will go to Adacel as part of ongoing support work.

Finally, the **Seismic Safety Risk Mitigation** program consists of a network of seismic sensors installed in critical air traffic control facilities that provide real time engineering data and structural safety assessments on buildings following earthquakes. Without more information it is impossible to know what kind of work this would be going forward, but it sounds like support required expanding the installation of sensors throughout additional FAA facilities.

Final Words

Although \$14 million is not a lot of money in the grand scheme of things, the overall DME IT budget request at the department for FY 2015 is over \$1.7 billion. This is down a bit from the \$1.73 billion received in FY 2014, but it remains a sizable sum nevertheless. Ninety-nine percent of this money will be going to fund efforts currently underway, so while this means there are precious few net new IT dollars, there will still be work to compete for, or defend, as the case may be.