

Connecticut awards contract for criminal justice information system

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Earlier this week, Connecticut **Governor Dannel Malloy announced** the signing of a contract between the state and Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. (ACS) for the highly-anticipated criminal justice information system (CJIS). **Connecticut's CJIS Governing Board** has been planning this project since 2008, when the project was approved by the state's general assembly. Once in place, the system will provide access to comprehensive criminal history records to all state branches of government.

GovWin has tracked the Connecticut CJIS project from April 2008 through its recent implementation. The state started the project by hiring MTG Management as a consultant in 2009. Following the consulting effort, the state issued a request for information (RFI) in March 2009. Over the next year and a half, the project was stalled due to possible lack of funds. In mid-2010, several drafts of the CJIS solicitation were presented to the state legislature, and the RFP was issued in October 2010. With a price tag estimated at \$25 million, many were invested in when, and if, the project would be awarded. As stated above, those fears were set aside when Governor Malloy announced the contract signing with ACS.

Last month, **GovWin Senior Analyst Chris Cotner posted a blog** detailing good news as it relates to public safety budgets in fiscal years 2010 through 2013. According to the analysis, over the next two years (FY 12 and FY 13), there is a strong likelihood that public safety and homeland security budgets will increase, which is great news to vendors. It is also good news to state and local governments that have tabled projects over the past few years due to lack of funding. While this market may not see the boom it once saw prior to the market collapse and subsequent recession, the good news is this market will begin to see more growth.

GovWin Public Safety and Homeland Security Senior Analyst Jeff Webster sees these increased funds going toward public safety communications, and expects agencies will begin to look for new tools to do more work with less personnel. One of these tools will be criminal justice information systems. In order for state and local governments to effectively reduce time in solving crimes, new computer systems, document management and other software will be needed to combat the loss of public safety officials laid off in the past few years. Other states can use the new Connecticut CJIS project as a benchmark for what to strive for. While the cost of the CJIS project may be out of reach in the short term, many states may begin their own statewide CJIS plans considering the time required to plan such a project.

Analyst's Take:

Over the next few years, as many state and local agencies remain tight on hiring, software and other tools like traffic enforcement cameras will be essential in doing more with less. While funding may increase slightly, it will still be important to find ways to use that money more efficiently. Criminal justice information systems and other document management systems can streamline a city, county or state's information in a way that is easier to understand and saves time and effort. Vendors can begin to work with smaller localities as well as states in developing plans for CJIS programs. Hiring a consultant at the state level and using Connecticut's model as a guide is a good place to start. State and local agencies can determine what their needs will be now and in the future, and come up with a plan to present to the state or local legislature. Securing support from the top will only make it easier when implementing from the bottom.