

## **Questions and Responses - BTSC Pitchman Event Kick-Off – Millennial Brief**

**Mr. Mark Borkowski, Chief Acquisition Executive & Assistant Commissioner, Office of Acquisition**

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security**

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### **1. How do we get info on the communications issue, particularly on the border(s)?**

**Response:** Simply put, schedule a meeting with us. We do this all the time – it can be on the phone. It doesn't have to be you showing us something – you can come and ask questions. Ask what our capabilities are and what are gaps are. If you want to get into conversation with us, we are happy to do that – we want to engage with industry and we want it to be two-ways. This is one reason for this BSTC – to create opportunities for engagement and solutions.

### **2. Beyond the presentations in February, what will be the next steps of the BTSC process? Will there be demonstrations, pilots, or other such events?**

**Response:** That's the goal – we want to turn these things into something actionable. We would like this to happen, we want nifty, good ideas to come from members of the BSTC, ideally but not needed is for those ideas to be based on pooling good ideas and resources across BSTC members – academic, large and small businesses. We want to take these good ideas, identify funding, work through an efficient and appropriate procurement process, and get these piloted. If the ideas generate interest among our operators, the momentum will follow. There is no 100% guarantee, but this is what we want to build.

### **3. Can you briefly talk about training challenges within the CBP given the diverse mission and specialties are involved.**

**Response:** We have specialized training – it is very important. The basic training for a border patrol agent is over 100 days. The training involves complex procedures and laws as well as technical operators of many technology tools and law enforcement equipment. Now there is recurring training and then training when policies change. We also have leadership training. So while I am not sure what type of training you are referring to, we have a training office and many needs in this area.

### **4. DOD has money for procurement and for Ops. This can cause problems. Is your money divided this way?**

**Response:** Yes, but it has not always been, over the past few years we have changed our appropriation structure to a common appropriations system and now our training for procurement and operations is separate, and now our funding is also typically 1 year funding. We work with this, but we also partner with Science & Technology which has multi-year funding, to help us with emerging research and development capabilities.

**6. Who are the members of the BSTC? Is there a public facing page for information on BSTC?**

**Response:** The BSTC Management Firm is ATI, and the point of contact is Merv Leavitt. The website, which lists the BSTC members, is [https://bstc.ati.org/current\\_members.html](https://bstc.ati.org/current_members.html).

**7. Thinking about schedules, when would you like or expect to see the first BSTC pilot effort to be put in the field?**

**Response:** Procurements for pilots can be expedited, the goal would be to get that pilot fielded within several weeks or months. If it is new, we may need to get that authorized, which may take some additional time.

**8. Who will be evaluating the pilot concepts? Will the evaluators primarily be Government or also industry?**

**Response:** The panel that will be hearing the top 10 pitches during the Pitchman event will be a Government panel, but the process will be supported by the BTSC industry partners and organized jointly with the BTSC management firm.

**9. Do you see a need for counter drone capability?**

**Response:** There are some legal constraints on this capability, but we have ongoing engagement on this matter across the Government space and there is room for involvement in this arena.

**10. You spoke a lot about CBP however in the instructions it highlights DHS mission areas. Will CBP only be represented and the CBP mission areas or will other DHS mission areas be represented in evaluation of ideas? Thank you for doing this!**

**Response:** The BSTC is for the greater DHS border security mission, but initial energy and focus is coming from CBP, but there will be other component representatives at the Pitchman event. The organization for it is stemming from CBP, S&T and OCPO, but the pitches can target the larger DHS border security mission.

**11. President Trump and DOT Secretary Chou recently announced UAS Integration Pilot Program (UASIPP), wherein State & Local Governments (including Native American Councils) can become involved in the Regulatory, Policy-making, and Technology Development issues of integrating UAS Platforms and Programs into their jurisdictions. FAA will 'Award' 5+ MOA Agreements (initial tranche), and allow those Teams to conduct UAS Operations & Trials that are not normally allowed to other companies and entities. This will include such things as BVLOS; Advanced Communications & Navigation tech; UAV Traffic Management-UTM; UAS Training & Certification; Facial & Biometric Recognition; etc. Is DHS interested in Participation via BSTC?**

**Response:** The DHS UAS community is not yet fully aware of the BSTC but we are very interested in ideas for UAS, small UAV and counter UAS capabilities from BSTC members that could help support the border security mission.

**12. You stated earlier that the best innovations make use of wasted resource to create productive outcomes. What would you say are some of your wasted resources?**

**Response:** What I was referring to was a discipline called tris, from a Russian who found that sometimes the best innovations come from when people are faced with fundamental paradoxes – like create something large and small at the same time. His example was a low-cost, low-weight lawnmower that is not too loud (muffler). The grass clippings became the resource. The thing we most often waste in Government is time – waiting for results to come back from a computer, trying to figure out what the information on the screen means, waiting for someone to get back to you. This is a good question, but that’s my off-the-top of my head answer!

**13. Do you need brand new ideas or are you interested in areas we may already be working on with other components of CBP but running into issues with funding?**

**Response:** We are interested in ideas across the spectrum. The ideas need not be new. We want ideas that are focused on our requirements and ideas that go beyond our requirements. A definition I like for innovation is the introduction of something new into a system that has not used it before.

**15. Can you explain in more detail the process for getting a Pilot Study started and the players involved such as your office and/or field offices?**

**Response:** There are often ideas that come into the Agency and we expose them to our operational components and if they are interested, we can do an expedited contracting process to obtain a small quantity of the items and test them. We have supported several pilots in the past.

**16. How are you telling your own organization about this?**

**Response:** The CBP Commissioner is interested in this and is interested in leveraging this – he is specifically looking for mechanisms for going from our innovation start up process to the next step and looks at the BSTC as part of that transition. We have more information sharing to go, but with the support of the Commissioner, the OCPO PIL and S&T, we have the ability to seed this and plan to expand our information sharing about not just the Pitchman Event but the BSTC consortium and its capabilities to support the border security mission across DHS.