



For Immediate Release
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Alaska Selects Niche to Manage Critical Law Enforcement Information

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA: Alaska, the largest state in the US, has selected Niche Record Management System (RMS) to manage its state law enforcement information. The agency is Alaska's Department of Public Safety (DPS), provider of police and other public safety services throughout the state through the Division of Alaska State Troopers (AST), the Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) and the Division of Fire & Life Safety (FLS).

Alaska is by far the largest US state – a landmass 2.5 times the size of Texas and 1/5 the size of the "lower 48 states" combined. Its challenging frontier geography and limited road infrastructure means much of the state is accessible only by aircraft, ATV, or boat in the summer, dogsled and snow machine in the winter. While Alaska is big, its population is small and spread out; about 40% of the state's population of 698,473 lives in the city of Anchorage, with the remainder spread across vast distances within the state.

One of nine bidders for the Alaska contract, Niche won out as the only system capable of meeting requirements critical to Alaska's unique challenges including poor connectivity in many areas of the state. In many areas, bandwidth is highly limited and unreliable. Officers must be able to conduct incident reporting work on standalone, disconnected computers on a patrol vessel in the middle of the Bering Sea, or when investigating a crime in a remote area such as a rural cabin or illegal wildlife kill site. In order to win the contract, Niche successfully demonstrated that its RMS works under all these conditions.

Says AST Director Colonel Audie Holloway, "With Niche, AST will be able to offer assistance to smaller agencies right down to the rural village level. Agencies will be able to share much more information, speak with a common language, use common training, and provide a useful tool to partners that would likely not otherwise see this type of opportunity for years to come."

AST has 521 officers and staff, and provides police services in most areas except communities that have their own local police departments; however, AST also provides a number of services within those as well, such as search and rescue, major crime investigation, and court services. AWT has 174 officers and staff, and provides enforcement of fish and game laws statewide.

According to Colonel Holloway, "AST is unique regarding the size of the area of our responsibility and jurisdiction and the challenges are great. We saw that Niche had faced these same challenges in several large Commonwealth countries and provided a successful product. Niche also seemed to be very willing to listen to and understand the issues faced by AST."

The previous Alaska DPS reporting system was paper-based, with an indexing system that is part of a larger mainframe application called the Alaska Public Safety Information Network (APSIN) that also serves as the statewide criminal justice information system. The RMS will replace the current indexing system part of APSIN and, more importantly, will replace the current paper incident reporting system.

"We are looking forward to providing our personnel with a modern RMS," says Colonel Holloway. "Most of us can't even imagine at this point just how much it will improve our ability to accomplish our mission at all levels within the organization."

Alaska DPS plans to roll out the complete RMS in phases based on regions and functions. A project manager and core project team of 11 employees with a broad spectrum of field experience and expertise are working on plans for the rollout; in addition, a team of IT personnel is preparing for implementation of the RMS within the state's IT infrastructure. Initial core team training was conducted July 12–21, 2010 with full deployment across the state anticipated during the first quarter of 2012.

ABOUT NICHE TECHNOLOGY AND NICHE RMS

Niche Technology is a privately owned company incorporated in Canada and the UK, specializing in law enforcement software. Niche Records Management System (Niche RMS) is used by more than 75,000 sworn officers worldwide, and current implementation projects will see that number rise to over 100,000. The system is being used to create efficiencies and improve performance across a range of operational policing functions. Niche RMS is currently used by over 50% of Canadian police officers; 27% of UK police officers in 12 forces; 20% of Australia's police officers; and is now in production use in the US. Eight of the 25 largest police services in the English-speaking world have selected Niche RMS as their core operational police system. For more information, go to www.nicherms.com.

For more information: Paul Sullivan, BreakThrough Communications Tel: +1-604-685-4742 Email: p.sullivan@breakthroughpr.com