



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First of its Kind Cell Phone Detection Technology Demonstration Held Today in Vacant Maryland Prison

TOWSON, MD (September 3, 2009)---Officials of the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) spent all day Thursday, September 3 observing demonstrations of cell phone detection technology from six communications vendors. The vendors, all based in Maryland, DC, and Virginia, demonstrated various products designed to locate illegal cell phones inside correctional facilities.

Several states were represented at the demonstration including South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and Delaware. Also on hand were Washington D.C. and several professional correctional associations – the American Correctional Association, Association of State Correctional Administrators and the American Jail Association. The National Governor's Association was also represented.

Cell phone use by inmates is a problem nationwide and one which DPSCS has been at the forefront of battling for the past few years (see separate information sheets enclosed). Cell phones connect inmates back to their former lifestyle on the street, foster illegal activity inside institutions, and can fuel increased prison violence. As cellular technology continues to evolve at a rapid pace, it becomes easier to smuggle inside a prison but harder to detect.

Maryland has been a leader in the fight against cell phones, enhancing security measures and developing innovative approaches to prevent the use of cell phones. DPSCS is training our own cell phone detector dogs and has invested \$750,000 in new entrance security technology. And under the leadership of Governor O'Malley, Maryland has taken an active role in supporting federal legislation on cell phone jamming.

Because safety and security in our prisons is a top priority, Maryland is obligated to seek out other kinds of detection technology available, not waiting as the national jamming debate continues. While seeking to learn about the best detecting technology available today, DPSCS realized there was no one solution, or national one set of best practices. National professional corrections associations and other prisons systems had advice on disparate technologies but it became obvious that there was not a "one size fits all" solution.

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Over the past few months DPSCS set up a series of informational meetings with the communications technology industry, consulted with corrections professional associations about the cellular detection possibilities that exist today. The result of these efforts was today's demonstration at the now vacant Maryland House of Correction.

"We've been a leader in this battle, an innovator," said DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard. "But we can't rest on our past achievements. We still believe that a combination of solutions, including jamming, will be necessary to keep our citizens, employees, and inmates safe from the dangers cell phones in prison create."

Thursday's demonstration was strictly informational in nature. The Department has not requested any bids or issued any Request for Proposals (RFPs) to any communications technology vendors, as required by Maryland law when seeking to purchase services from the private sector.

It is hoped that out of today's demonstration, DPSCS will gain a better understanding of how detection technology works in a correctional environment and if there is the possibility of a practical application of these tools inside Maryland's prisons.

During the demonstration, each vendor was allowed a specific time frame to demonstrate its equipment. The vendors demonstrating their technology today were:

Page 2 Science (VA)
ITT (MD)
MicroTech/Air Patrol (VA)
Tecore (MD)
Nortel Government Solutions (VA)
Compucat (DC)
Cell Antenna (MD)

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