

**AGENDA ITEM 9-F**  
**ACTION ITEM**

**TO: CHAIRMAN KAUFFMAN AND THE VRE OPERATIONS BOARD**

**FROM: DALE ZEHNER**

**DATE: JUNE 15, 2007**

**RE: AUTHORIZATION TO AWARD A CONTRACT FOR A VHF RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

The VRE Operations Board is being asked to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to award a contract to BearCom of Chantilly Virginia for the design and construction of a VHF two-way radio communications system. The contract is being recommended for **\$216,000, plus a 15% contingency of \$32,400, for a total amount not to exceed \$248,400.**

**BACKGROUND:**

Currently, both VRE and Amtrak communicate with VRE trains in service via cell phone. As part of VRE's safety and security planning, a void in that communication process was identified given that cellular and hard wire telephone systems are easily overwhelmed during times of national crisis. In addition, VRE does not currently have the ability to monitor the radio conversations between train crews and dispatchers when the events of an incident may be unfolding. The need for a two-way radio communication system was subsequently identified.

On April 30, VRE issued a solicitation for a two-way radio communication system. Responses were due on May 29 and two proposals were received. The scope of work included the design and construction of a VHF two-way radio communications system. Staff has reviewed the proposals, queried references, and interviewed and rated both firms on both oral and written presentations. Following this process, BearCom is being recommended for award.

This system will provide VRE with an assigned railroad radio frequency on which to transmit and receive information between VRE and the VRE Alexandria Communications headquarters as well as VRE and the Amtrak commuter rail command center in Washington, DC. Additionally, VRE will be able to monitor two Norfolk Southern and two CSXT radio frequencies utilized to dispatch and control freight trains, VRE, and Amtrak.

Following a notice to proceed, the radio system is estimated to take 4 months to complete.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funds are available from a FY 2005 Department of Homeland Security Grant, for which no local match is required. Funding is also being provided using a FY 2005 FTA security grant for which local match is being provided using state and local funds.

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**FROM: DALE ZEHNER**  
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**RESOLUTION  
9F-06-2007  
OF THE  
VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS  
OPERATIONS BOARD**

**WHEREAS**, as part of VRE's safety and security planning, a void in the communication process between VRE and its trains was identified given that cellular and hard wire telephone systems are easily overwhelmed during times of national crisis; and,

**WHEREAS**, the need for a two-way radio communication system was subsequently identified; and,

**WHEREAS**, VRE advertised for and received two responsive proposals for the design and construction of a VHF radio communications system; and,

**WHEREAS**, staff has conducted interviews, rated and reviewed both oral and written presentations from both submitters, and has queried references for all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the VRE Operations Board authorizes the Chief Executive Officer to award a contract to BearCom of Chantilly Virginia for the design and construction of a VHF two-way radio communications system. The contract is being recommended **for \$216,000, plus a 15% contingency of \$32,400, for a total amount not to exceed \$248,400.**