Army SBIR Newsletter

SBIR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE http://www.armysbir.com/

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Soldiers with Charlie Battery, 1-377 FA fire an M198, 155 mm howitzer during a recent combined live-fire exercise. Photo by: www.army.mil

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide the small business community, Army, DoD and other government researchers and leadership additional insight into the Army SBIR program.

Army SBIR Vision

To be the Army's premier source of innovative technology solutions, providing direct access to America's high-tech small business research & development community, enabling our Soldiers deployed around the world.

Army SBIR Helpdesk

The Army SBIR Helpdesk provides assistance to small businesses and Government participants with questions and issues regarding the Army SBIR program. The Army SBIR help desk is operated Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm (except on Federal holidays). You may reach the held desk by email at army.sbir@us.army.mil or by calling (703) 806-2085.

SBIR Program Office

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Message from the Army SBIR PM

As you are probably aware, the SBIR program authorization (15 U.S.C. 638) expired on September 30, 2008. Fortunately a continuing resolution (PL 110-235) was already in place to extend all small business efforts through March 2009. As of Friday March 20, 2009 President Obama signed into law HR 1541 to amend PL 110-235 and to continue all small business programs through July 31, 2009. This resolution grants continued authorization to the SBIR program. While this effort is encouraging, SBIR reauthorization is never a sure bet. The SBIR Program Management Office will continue to provide information on any SBIR legislative issues.

Sincerely,
Christopher S. Rinaldi, P.E.

Spotlight: Aviation Applied Technology Directorate (AATD) Small Business Innovation Research Day

On February 3, 2009, the Aviation Applied Technology Directorate (AATD) sponsored a Small Business Innovation Research Day at Fort Eustis, Virginia. The event brought together the three main participants in technology development – SBIR businesses with promising technologies, aviation industry partners, and Government representatives to work on transitioning technologies to the Soldiers.

The goal for the day was for Aviation & Missile Research, Development & Engineering Center (AMRDEC (A)), PEO Aviation and related Prime/Integrators to view and discuss the SBIR technologies being developed at AATD. Attending the event were the leads from AATD Power Systems, System Integration, Contracting, Platform Technology, Prototyping Divisions and Concepts and Requirements Directorate, and PEO Aviation. From the Prime/Integrator community: The Boeing Company, Anaspere, Inc., GE Aviation, Sikorsky, Kaman, Pratt & Whitney, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin Corporation, BAE, Rolls Royce, Bell Helicopter, and Agusta Westwind Inc.

The event was organized by AATD's Lauren Sebring, Chief of the Contracting Division and Small Business Specialist. AATD's participation in the Army's SBIR program has led to the development of many new technologies directly applicable to aviation platforms. SBIR Day successfully targeted participants from small business, large business and government with the goal of maximizing the transition of innovative technologies.

For more information on SBIR Outreach events, please visit:
http://www.armysbir.com/outreach
or contact the SBIR Program Management Office at army.sbir@us.army.mil

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ARMY SBIR
SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH

Sgt. Ryan Pike, left, and Staff Sgt. Altaf Swati setup a tactical satellite radio in Iraq.
Photo by: www.army.mil

SOLICITATION DATES:

09.2	
Solicitation Opens	May 18, 09
Solicitation Closes: Phase I proposals due	June 17, 09

DATES TO REMEMBER

11th Annual NIH SBIR/STTR Conference	Jun 30–Jul 1, 09

http://nbdc.unomaha.edu/SBIR

12th Annual Space and Missile Defense Conference	Aug 17-20, 09

http://www.smdconf.org/

2009 Beyond Phase II Conference	Sept 21-25, 09

http://www.beyondphaseii.com

Do you have a Success Story?

We are continually seeking new "success stories" from small businesses, much like the one you see featured in this newsletter. Successful small businesses and their technology are highlighted in our yearly Commercialization Brochure, website, and quarterly newsletter. If you are interested in submitting a story, please contact the SBIR Program Management Office at army.sbir@us.army.mil.

Featured Army SBIR Success Story

Think-A-Move, LTD
www.think-a-move.com
Beachwood, OH

U.S. Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center

Speech Control of Unmanned Ground Vehicles

Improving situational and operational awareness during the operation of Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGVs) has been identified as a capability gap that Think-A-Move's (TAM) hands-free technology addresses. Controlling a UGV requires the operator to focus on the operator control unit (OCU), resulting in decreased situational awareness and increased operator vulnerability. Previous attempts to use speech control have not been successful because systems have not performed well in noisy environments.

TAM's technology captures speech in the ear canal and uses it to control devices and communications. This technology generates a very clear signal, even under extreme external noise levels, enabling UGV operators to use speech controls as a supplement to the OCU. This facilitates heads-up and hands-free operation, with increased situational awareness, decreased training time, and improved man-machine interface.

The TAM system consists of an earpiece, connected via wire to the OCU, containing a microphone and speaker pointed into the ear. TAM's software, running on the OCU, then processes the voice message, removing remaining external noise and enhancing the quality of the voice message. TAM's speech recognition software converts the spoken words into commands and sends those commands via the OCU to the UGV.

TAM's hands-free, heads-up speech control systems allow Soldiers operating UGV's significantly increased situational awareness and effectiveness and decrease their vulnerability. In addition, the systems will enable them to more easily control UGVs and will assist in decreasing the time required for mission completion.

Phase III Impacts:
Under a $340K Phase III contract that Think-A-Move received from the Army, TAM is integrating its system with iRobot's Operator Control Unit. In addition, Think-A-Move was selected for the U.S. Army's Commercialization Pilot Program (CPP) and awarded a $600K contract to develop a field-testable prototype of its speech control technology for the iRobot PackBot. The State of Ohio also awarded Think-A-Move a grant for $350K to support its efforts to commercialize this technology and bring it to market.

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