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Army awards wireless security contract

By Patience Wait

The Army's Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization Program, or I3MP, has awarded a contract to install wireless intrusion detection and prevention systems at 20 sites throughout North America. The award was made Jan. 26 to Telos Corp. of Ashburn, Va., and is worth in excess of \$1 million, company officials said.

Under the terms of the agreement, Telos will deliver more than 1,500 sensors provided by Atlanta-based AirDefense Inc. to the Army sites. The work includes conducting site surveys and project reports for each location, as well as installation, testing and onsite training. The AirDefense sensors protect the Army's local area networks as well as wireless networks from unauthorized access.

The award expands work the Army already has undertaken to install wireless intrusion and detection systems at 16 other sites in the continental United States, following the June 2006 issuance of a Defense Department supplemental policy on wireless security that called for constant monitoring for wireless breaches.

The AirDefense security system is a distributed wireless LAN monitoring system that provides comprehensive detection of all wireless threats and intrusions by monitoring the airwaves and detecting all 802.11 wireless LAN devices and traffic. The sensors can identify the presence of unauthorized wireless devices and can determine if they pose a threat such as connecting to a wired network, opening a path that a hacker could exploit to gain access behind network firewalls, said Kevin McCaffrey, director of federal programs for AirDefense.

The system "will continuously scan the airwaves to determine policy compliance, detect misconfigurations, and even provide operational support and performance monitoring," McCaffrey said. "In the event that a security event occurs, the system can be used to perform forensic analysis to determine the nature and extent of the incident," identifying when the connection occurred, how long it lasted and how much data was transferred out, for instance.