

PRESS RELEASE

Portland Seeks Designation as First 'Synthetic City'

Technology in the war on terror now key to homeland security

PORTLAND, OR—August 18, 2006—*On Friday, August 18, a group of federal, state and local officials, academics, and private sector leaders will convene on the campus of Portland State University to talk about a potential transfer of power. Under discussion is the notion that technology used to fight the war on terror abroad could soon be applied to homeland security needs...and that Portland, Oregon could be an early test-bed for such transfers.*

According to the Regional Alliances for Infrastructure and Network Security (RAINS), a central player in the development of homeland defense technology solutions, the primary military technology under consideration for transfer is "synthetic city" software—a digital information platform that fuses data from a variety of real-world sources, such as 9-1-1 centers, atmospheric sensors, smart buildings, health networks, and intelligent transportation systems—then organizes and displays it all in a 3-D geographical modeling and simulation environment.

"Our military friends are going to be demonstrating some very cutting edge technology—sort of the ultimate Sim City," explained RAINS' chairman Charles Jennings, "They'll be displaying a virtual version of the real Portland, with real-time data inside." Jennings is the CEO of Portland-based Swan Island Networks.

The "Synthetic Portland" conference brings together participants from around the country, representing all levels of government, large federal contractors and system integrators; information technology vendor companies; universities; hospitals; and various types of non-governmental service organizations.

Also participating will be representatives from the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration; United States Joint Forces Command (JFCOM); the Information Assurance Directorate of the National Security Agency; and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

"We are excited to have such an innovative technology conference in Portland—especially since its ultimate purpose is to increase public safety," said Matt Lampe, the City of Portland's Chief Technology Officer.

This new technology, like the Internet, was developed by the military and now, the military is actively exploring its use and potential in civil environments to improve emergency response, transportation systems and sustainability practices.

The central purpose of new synthetic city technology is to generate predictive models that can be used by the real city to prepare for and manage emergencies, increase public safety, and generally improve urban quality of life.

According to Jennings, “Although it could have been held anywhere, having this conference in Portland makes perfect sense. To connect previously stove-piped information systems in new ways, you need a city with a culture of both innovation and collaboration—two of Portland’s best qualities.”

“This is a unique opportunity to look at new, advanced technology and how that technology could help in the event of disasters or security problems.

Portland State University does leading edge research in computer security, and we’re interested in how that research can be used for application in areas that will be discussed at this symposium. That makes our campus the perfect venue for this event,” says Mike Burton, Vice Provost of Portland State University and RAINS board member.

Sponsors of the event, in addition to RAINS and PSU, include Oregon Economic & Community Development Department; Portland Development Commission; Siemens; Online Business Systems; the Zeno Group; and Swan Island Networks.

About RAINS

RAINS (Regional Alliances for Infrastructure and Network Security) is a public/private partnership formed in 2001. RAINS has forged alliances with technology companies, multiple research universities, critical infrastructure providers, local, state and federal agencies, and first responders. Its Connect & Protect information sharing service was launched in 2003, and has successfully delivered hundreds of thousands of alerts.

Connect & Protect was described as a “radical breakthrough” by WIRED Magazine (December 2005). Connect & Protect was also a finalist for the inaugural Mitretek Innovations Award in Homeland Security, a partnership of Mitretek Systems and the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government.

RAINS is best known for its highly regarded Connect & Protect™ program, which functions as an online community watch center in Portland, Oregon.

Connect & Protect links over 250 public and private participants including representatives of government agencies, schools, critical infrastructure, first responders, emergency managers, and other public safety stakeholders in a trusted network, allowing them to share sensitive, mission-critical information. The system fuses alerts sourced from 9-1-1 centers, NOAA, online dispatch, radio traffic, AMBER Alerts, etc., with geospatial and other supporting information, thus delivering high-value, real-time situational awareness to targeted, authenticated and authorized recipients. The system enables subgroups (both planned and self-organizing) to form community networks and exchange sensitive information with trust and confidence.

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