

October 13, 2014

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Delores J. Barber
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
The Privacy Office
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
STOP-0655
Washington, D.C. 20528-0655

Re: Contracts Between Department of Homeland Security and Research Triangle Institute

Dear Ms. Barber:

This letter constitutes a request under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and is submitted on behalf of the Electronic Privacy Information Center (“EPIC”).

EPIC seeks documents related to contracts between the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) and the Research Triangle Institute.

Background

USASpending.gov shows that DHS first granted contract number HSHQDC08C00100 on June 30, 2008 in the amount of \$6,855,147.¹ Since then the contract has been modified or renewed sixteen times – on February 23, 2009; April 21, 2009; May 20, 2009; June 6, 2009; August 5, 2009; September 26, 2009; March 25, 2010; April 8, 2010; April 14, 2010; July 22, 2010; September 21, 2010; March 17, 2011; June 17, 2011; September 29, 2011; and July 27, 2012.² The description of the initial June 20, 2008 contract states:

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[http://usaspending.gov/explore?fiscal_year=all&comingfrom=searchresults&piid=HSHQDC08C00100&ty
peofview=complete](http://usaspending.gov/explore?fiscal_year=all&comingfrom=searchresults&piid=HSHQDC08C00100&typeofview=complete)

http://usaspending.gov/search?form_fields=%7B%22search_term%22%3A%22HSHQDC08C00100%22%2C%22spending_cat%22%3Anull%2C%22dept%22%3Anull%2C%22extent_competed%22%3Anull%2C%22recipient_duns%22%3Anull%2C%22psc_code%22%3Anull%2C%22naics_code%22%3Anull%2C%22year%22%3Anull%7D&sort_by=dollars&per_page=25

This Request Is In Response To Broad Agency Announcement (Baa) Number Baa08-01 Submission And Supports Congressional Mandates For The Dhs Directorate Of Science And Technology (S&T) And Rti To Establish Ihss. Formation Of (Ihss) Within The Community Preparedness And Resilience Program Area Supports The S&T Effort By Establishing A Resource For Foundational And Applied Research In The Sociological, Physiological And Psychological Dimensions Of Homeland Security; In Modeling And Simulation Relevant To Hazard And Risk Analysis, Decision Analysis And Training; And In Human Systems Development To Support Federal, State And Local Execution Of Homeland Security Missions. Ihss Is A Congressionally-Mandated Center To Be Established Under The Research Triangle Institute Of North Carolina (Rti) And Is Dedicated To Conducting Applied Technological And Social Science Research With Universities, Other Federal Agencies, State And Local Security Agencies And The Private Sector.³

The latest modification, made on July 27, 2012 states “The Purpose Of This Modification Is To Change The Clin 0004 Project Name From Violent Intent Modeling And Simulation (Vims) To Threat Analysis System Requirements (Tasr).”⁴

USASpending.gov also lists several related contracts between the Department of Homeland Security and the Research Triangle Institute, including contract number HSHQDC11F00087 (first granted September 14, 2011 with seven modifications/extensions)⁵ and HSHQDC14A00015 (first issued July 3, 2014 with one modification/extension).⁶

Documents Requested

1. All contracts, statements of work, and technical specifications related to contracts numbers HSHQDC08C00100, HSHQDC11F00087, and HSHQDC14A00015, including statements of work and technical specifications related to updates, modifications, and renewals of the above contracts.

Request for “News Media” Fee Status and Fee Waiver

³ <http://government-contracts.findthebest.com/l/2744144/Research-Triangle-Institute-Inc-Office-of-Procurement-Operations-HSHQDC08C00100>

⁴ <http://government-contracts.findthebest.com/l/2744144/Research-Triangle-Institute-Inc-Office-of-Procurement-Operations-HSHQDC08C00100>

⁵ http://usaspending.gov/search?form_fields=%7B%22search_term%22%3A%22HSHQDC11F00087+%22%7D

⁶ http://usaspending.gov/search?form_fields=%7B%22search_term%22%3A%22HSHQDC14A00015%22%2C%22spending_cat%22%3Anull%2C%22dept%22%3Anull%2C%22extent_competed%22%3Anull%2C%22recipient_duns%22%3Anull%2C%22psc_code%22%3Anull%2C%22naics_code%22%3Anull%2C%22year%22%3Anull%7D&sort_by=date&per_page=25

EPIC is a “representative of the news media” for fee purposes.⁷ Based on our status as a “news media” requester, we are entitled to receive the requested record with only duplication fees assessed.

Further, because disclosure of this information will “contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government,” any duplication fees should be waived. The disclosure of these contracts and related documents will allow the public to understand the activities of Department of Homeland Security and will allow the public to evaluate how public dollars are being spent.

Conclusion

Thank you for your consideration of this request. As provided in 5 U.S.C. §552, I will anticipate your determination on our request within twenty business days. For questions regarding this request I can be contacted at 202-483-1140 ext. 111 or FOIA@epic.org.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ginger P. McCall
Director, EPIC Open Government Project

⁷ *EPIC v. Department of Defense*, 241 F. Supp. 2d 5 (D.D.C. 2003).