



Charter Agreement

Approved September 2006
Updated and approved February 2009

Introduction/Background

The 2005 hurricane season focused significant attention on the need for greater coordination among US emergency response agencies at all levels of government in the United States. First responder agencies seeking to support national domestic HLS goals feel the urgency of this need to an unprecedented extent.

In response, a number of national public safety organizations with a keen appreciation for the importance of geospatial technologies (GIS) to the nation's preparedness goals, have entered into a partnership for the purpose of enhancing our national GIS preparedness capacity.

A Memorandum of Understanding establishing the National Alliance for Public Safety GIS (NA-PSG) was ratified in November 2006, and calls for the NA-PSG Steering Committee to develop a definitive written document to govern the activities of the Alliance. The Steering Committee met in September of 2006 for the purpose of developing this plan. This version of that plan was updated at the 2009 Steering Committee meeting and contains the following sections:

1. NAPSG Strategic Vision
2. NAPSG Governance Structure

1. Strategic Vision: To overcome the challenges local governments face in implementing GIS programs which effectively support local and national preparedness goals.

2. Desired outcomes:

- Develop a national professional GIS preparedness capability for public safety
- Engage and support the local emergency responder* community in the use and coordination of GIS for disaster preparedness and response
- Coordinate, leverage and extend the goals of existing GIS activities among member agencies

- Support the goals of existing state and federal geospatial data sharing programs
- Identify at-risk and high potential sites, to establish pilot sites for the integration of GIS into operational capability for preparedness activities based on best practices
- Encourage and enhance and the coordination of Emergency Operations related GIS activity
- Advocate public policies to encourage realistic, and appropriate use of GIS for public safety and the coordination of federal, state and local response
- Provide subject matter expertise to agencies involved in the development of collaborative models, grants and programmatic initiatives for public safety data sharing (e.g. the DHS GIS data model)

This vision will be accomplished through the activities described in the document, “Operational Visioning Components of the National Alliance for Public Safety GIS.” The Steering Committee will provide oversight and maintain currency of the Components described in that document.

2. Governance Structure: decision making process, membership, and financial management

- **Decision making:** NA-PSG Steering Committee will meet twice annually to discuss general NA-PSG business activities, consider Task Force Recommendations, and approve new partners. The governing process will include:
 - Simple majority vote for conducting normal alliance business (approval of new partners will require 2/3 vote, see below). Voting will occur electronically within a week of notice via email. Partners who were not able to participate in the discussion on a given topic under consideration may request a one week postponement of voting for clarification.
 - NA-PSG will use rotating chairs to facilitate alliance business activities. The seated chair will call and facilitate steering committee meetings and other communications.
- **Task Forces:** The work of NA-PSG will be done through Task Forces. Partner organizations may propose activities to the steering committee. Upon acceptance, the committee will appoint a new or existing task force to manage the project. The steering committee will oversee coordination of all alliance activities through regular reporting by Task Force Chairs.

To bring prospective projects or task forces to NA-PSG, the proposing partner group accepts responsibility for the chairmanship of that task force and the full burden of managing the project. This includes:

- fiduciary responsibility
- start date – end date
- communications (regular reports)

Each partner organization is eligible to sit on any NAPSG task force approved by the Steering Committee, and can choose to opt in or out of participation in that activity at any time.

- **Membership:** Partnership in NA-PSG is defined by the existing MOU document. Participation in Alliance activities involves the following:
 - New partners will be approved by 2/3 majority of steering committee during steering committee meetings.
 - Request partnership through an existing partner via a one page letter of request which describes organization and reasons for consideration.
 - Agree to accept the rotational chair.
 - Partners can consider establishing projects/task forces
 - Steering Committee eligibility will be limited to the original Charter Members and associations representing state and local public safety disciplines (Fire/EMS, Law enforcement, Communications and dispatch, Public health, Emergency management).
 - Member structure: NA-PSG will not accept general memberships. Participation in Alliance projects and task forces will be coordinated and assigned through their respective partner organizations.
- **Financial Management:** There will be no fees at this time. NA-PSG is not incorporated and therefore has no direct mechanism for handling funds. Alliance Partners proposing activities and task forces will assume the full burden of fiduciary responsibility for activities associated with those projects.