

January 4, 2009

Technology Cluster Concept Development

Event: Initial Technology Innovation Hampton Roads Cluster Workshop

Date: January 25th and 26th, 2010.

Location: Portsmouth Renaissance Hotel, Portsmouth, VA

Key Speakers anticipated:

- Ms. Karen Mills, Administrator of the Small Business Administration (Confirmed)
- Representative Glenn Nye (D-VA 2nd District) (Confirmed)
- Mr. Victor Gavin, Exec Dir Programs PEO Littoral and Mine Warfare (Confirmed)
- Ms. Lesa Roe, Director, NASA Langley Research Center (Confirmed)

In alignment with the recent federal place-based policies initiative, the Small Business Administration, DoD (Joint Advanced Concepts), and other federal agencies are looking to further promote technology clusters in various regions of the country as a way to maintain and increase a cutting edge technology developing process that:

- 1) Further promotes innovative defense and homeland security capability development, by
- 2) Promoting a highly skilled research community and enabled technology cluster environment that creates the useful and valuable products for national defense and homeland security, and also for commercial applications.

There are 3 regions in the country involved in this initial cluster development initiative; Southeastern Michigan for robotic automotive applications, Hawaii for unmanned underwater vehicle applications, and Hampton Roads for sensors in general, and unmanned systems enabled port security in particular.

The concept is still maturing, with Michigan being the furthest along having a workshop of stakeholders in June which consisted of SBA leaders, senior DoD managers, AUVSI leadership (local and national), regional universities, regional small business associations, and the Army's Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) being the DoD regional lead.

The Hampton Roads initial workshop will be held January 25th and 26th. The purpose of the workshop is to get stakeholders together to discuss the way ahead on a multi-agency and stakeholder cluster framework. Port security has a natural and ongoing DoD/DHS interest in the littoral domain which includes air, surface, sub-surface, and ground. A particular goal is to further develop unmanned systems and sensors to improve capabilities. There is also a desire to facilitate commercial applications of the technologies developed and refined. Done right, this cluster concept in Hampton Roads will have significant positive outcomes for practical interoperability development in view of the plethora of operators and engineers from the Navy, Air Force, Army, Coast Guard (including C2CEN), NASA, NOAA and NATO that are in the area as a home base; as well as the universities and technology resources in the region. One of the key goals of the initiative is to more bring into the technology development process innovative small businesses via the mentor-protégé program and SBIR / STTR programs.

Points of contact:

Cluster workshop regional point of contact on behalf of the Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance is Bill Piersol, bill.piersol@kcg-inc.net

Mr. Cliff Hudson, recently of OSD Joint Advanced Concepts and now a special assistant to the Administrator at SBA will continue to provide updates on the initiative.