



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

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PROCUREMENT OFFICER'S DETERMINATION

COMAR 21.05.09.04

Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing

Contract Title: Inmate Telecommunication and Technology Services

Contract No.: Q00B9400038

Contractor Name: Global Tel Link Corporation

Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Contract: Prince William County, Virginia

Date: May 13, 2019

I. BACKGROUND

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services ("DPSCS" or "Department") inmate telecommunication system has been provided by Global Tel Link Corporation (GTL) since 2013. The system has been invaluable in helping to identify illegal activity conducted via the telephone system. DPSCS and GTL extends usage of this system to any law enforcement agency that requests it including local, state, and federal agencies as well as the US Attorney's office. GTL also currently contracts with Prince William County, Virginia for an inmate telecommunication system and other information technology services such as kiosks and tablets. The system requirements in the Prince William Contract are consistent with DPSCS telecommunication system requirements.

II. FINDING OF FACTS

In accordance with State Finance and Procurement Article 21, 13-110(b) and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 21.05.09.04, "Before sponsoring or participating in an intergovernmental cooperative purchasing agreement (ICPA), the procurement officer of the primary procurement unit shall make a written determination that it is in the best interest of the State to do so, and which includes a statement that the participation in the agreement will: (1) Provide cost

benefits to the State; or (2) Promote administrative efficiencies, or promote intergovernmental cooperation. The Department looked at various contracts throughout the country and did a cost comparison between those contracts and found the contract established by the Prince William County Procurement Office in Virginia provides not only a cost benefit to the Department but an overall comprehensive solution to the bring the Department and the State.

**Cost Benefits**

A contract with GTL through Prince William County, Virginia contract will provide cost benefits to the state of Maryland, by offering the State a low Domestic Per-Minute rate, which is lower than the rates charged to 46 other states by GTL and other companies offering similar services.

| State          | Provider    | Domestic Per Min Rate   |
|----------------|-------------|---|
| New Hampshire  | GTL         |  |
| Maryland       | GTL         |   |
| West Virginia  | CenturyLink |   |
| Vermont        | GTL         |   |
| Delaware       | GTL         |   |
| Virginia       | GTL         |   |
| Massachusetts  | Securus     |   |
| New York       | Securus     |   |
| New Jersey     | GTL         |   |
| Rhode Island   | GTL         |   |
| Minnesota      | GTL         |   |
| Ohio           | Securus     |   |
| Pennsylvania   | Securus     |   |
| Texas          | GTL         |   |
| Illinois       | Securus     |   |
| New Mexico     | Securus     |   |
| North Dakota   | GTL         |   |
| Nebraska       | GTL         |   |
| California     | GTL         |   |
| Maine          | Securus     |   |
| North Carolina | GTL         |   |
| South Carolina | GTL         |   |
| Idaho          | CenturyLink |   |
| Iowa           | CenturyLink |   |
| Oregon         | GTL         |   |

|              |              |  |
|--------------|--------------|--|
| Washington   | GTL          |  |
| Wyoming      | IC Solutions |  |
| Kentucky     | Securus      |  |
| Colorado     | GTL          |  |
| Georgia      | Securus      |  |
| Montana      | CenturyLink  |  |
| Hawaii       | GTL          |  |
| Utah         | CenturyLink  |  |
| Michigan     | GTL          |  |
| Tennessee    | GTL          |  |
| Kansas       | CenturyLink  |  |
| Oklahoma     | GTL          |  |
| Louisiana    | Securus      |  |
| Mississippi  | GTL          |  |
| Florida      | Securus      |  |
| South Dakota | GTL          |  |
| Nevada       | CenturyLink  |  |
| Wisconsin    | CenturyLink  |  |
| Alabama      | CenturyLink  |  |
| Connecticut  | Securus      |  |
| Indiana      | GTL          |  |
| Alaska       | Securus      |  |
| Arizona      | CenturyLink  |  |

Moreover, an ICPA with Prince William County for the telecommunication system and other technology services will create cost benefits for the state by providing the Department's personnel no charge and reducing the amounts inmates and their families are charged to communicate with their loved ones.

GTL has provided the Intelligence & Investigative Division (IID) of the DPSCS a "GTL Fusion Analyst" at no charge. The Fusion Analyst is a full time position completely funded by GTL. GTL provides IID with the analyst to assist with a variety of intelligence functions. The analyst is proficient in all things GTL and is able to create link analysis and data connections as requested. These services are in addition to normal duties which parallel that of a regular intelligence analyst, which includes anything from employee background investigations to security threat group (STG) analysis.

Furthermore, a contract through this ICPA will create efficiencies by improving the use of technology to analyze intelligence data, reduce the use of paper, and providing new services to our inmate population such as a tablets program,

electronic mailing, and kiosks that are already being provided in other correctional facilities throughout the nation.

Starting in 2013, the Department utilized the GTL jail call system. The system has proven to be extremely user friendly and easy to navigate, requiring little or no training on the part of the user for basic searches. The system provides access to the GTL Data IQ, which is an analytic tool that allows users to create a link analysis to any data that is maintained through DPSCS systems. Examples of this data include employee records (address and telephone numbers), visitation information, and commissary. We are able to use the information to cross reference with inmate jail calls, which allow us to identify anything from employee fraternization to potential criminal enterprise, as seen with the Eastern Correctional Institution investigation conducted jointly with the FBI in which 80 people were indicted.

IID will benefit greatly with the newest version of the GTL system which is proven to be even more user friendly than the prior system, and eliminates the need to download additional software in order to listen to calls as well as download calls for use in court proceedings. Due to the firewall issues that many government agencies employ, having to download additional software is not only time consuming on the part of the GTL administrators for IID, but also for Information Technology and Communications Division (ITCD) who have to answer the help desk tickets requiring assistance. Furthermore, the system would allow for staff to use key word searches with calls, which would allow staff to identify inmates and outside facilitators who are planning on introducing contraband or committing violence against another inmate or staff.

This contract will introduce new services to the inmate population that Department has yet to implement to date such as tablet program, electronic mail services, and kiosks that will interface into the inmate banking system. By allowing inmates to have access to tablets is a trend that many correctional agencies are moving towards. From an institutional standpoint, many institutions who already have the use of tablets in place report fewer assaults, both on inmates as well as on staff. DPSCS would be able to control the access and permissions of the tablets, and would be able to reward good behavior with additional application permissions.

From an intelligence standpoint, having inmates able to send and receive emails would be a valuable tool, for a variety of reasons. First, it would lower the amount of incoming and outgoing mail received by the institution, which would lower the amount of staff needed to process the mail and reduce the risk of exposure to harmful elements by DPSCS personnel. By lowering the amount of mail received, it will also lower the amount of contraband that is introduced into the institutions through the mail. Some states, such as Pennsylvania, have moved to eliminate paper mail in its entirety with the use of electronic mail and scanned mail.

Secondly, DPSCS reaps no financial benefit in how it currently handles its mail processing. By using an e-mail type system through the tablets, DPSCS would be

able to charge for each message (similar to how we currently charge for each phone call), and obtain a financial benefit from the system which in turn, could assist in paying for the system. Currently, to send mail inmates must purchase stamps, from which DPSCS receives no financial benefit. Inmates and their loved ones would be more inclined to use the email system as the cost to send a message would be cheaper than the cost of a stamp.

Analyzing these emails would be much more effective for intelligence staff, as the system provides key word searches and identifiers, and staff would not have to sort through poor handwriting, trying to decipher what a person is attempting to convey. Also, the information is securely stored in a cloud based platform, allowing staff to go back and research an inmate's email history if needed, a luxury we do not have with a paper mail system.

Finally, by reducing the amount of paper mail, mail handlers would be able to focus more on the mail that does enter the system, greatly improving the likelihood that contraband will be discovered. The benefits of having a mail scanning system would be similar to those outlined with having tablets/emails, as it would require all mail to be scanned, thus identifying any contraband being passed through the mail. Lately, we have seen an increase in pictures/drawings that are soaked in various liquids, to include liquid K-2. Having scanned mail would eliminate these types of incidents.

Moving the correctional facilities from the archaic "money order" system that is currently in place to an electronic system is a priority of the IID. Currently, the Department accepts payments only through lockboxes, in which inmates or inmates' family deposits money orders and/ or checks into the lockboxes which has to be physically picked up and deposit into the bank. With the major corruption cases, "following the money" is how the Department identifies outside facilitators who are conspiring to introduce contraband into our facilities. Having an electronic system would allow staff to identify who is putting money into inmate accounts, and if those individuals are connected to other inmates. Staff could monitor how much money is being placed into inmate accounts, and how often, which would assist investigators in linking inmates to other inmates and potential co-conspirators. From a financial standpoint, moving to an electronic payment system would eliminate the need for staff to process payments and accounts, which would also eliminate human error and the potential for theft on the part of DPSCS employees.

Electronic visitation and a visitation scheduler are other features offered by GTL. Electronic visitation would greatly reduce the likelihood of contraband introduction, and would also provide assistance to those inmates who have family that are unable to visit for whatever reason (distance, cost, age, etc.). In regards to the visitation scheduler, which would be linked into Data IQ, inmates would have to schedule all visits, which would be valuable to intelligence staff when investigating inmates attempting to introduce contraband. The scheduler runs an automatic warrant check, and will ban those who are in violation of DPSCS visitation rules. It will also assist

in reducing long visitation lines and wait times, as the system only provides for so many visitations in one day.

MBE Participation

Although not a requirement of the Prince William County contract, GTL has agreed to continue to meet a Minority Business Enterprise goal of 20% on this new contract which is equal to the current contract.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the facts presented above and in accordance with COMAR 21.05.09.04, the Procurement Officer has determined that an intergovernmental cooperative purchasing agreement with Prince William County, Virginia for an inmate telecommunications system and other technology services is in the best interest of the state. It is estimated that the cost to inmates and their families to utilize this system will amount to approximately \$4.5 million per year contingent on usage. In accordance with COMAR 21.05.09.04, the Department, contingent upon approval of the Department of Information Technology and the Board of Public Works, recommends the award of a contract to Global Tel Link Corporation.

Determination: *[Signature]*

*[Redacted Signature]*

Procurement Officer

*6/3/19*  
Date

Concur:

*[Redacted Signature]*

William G. Stewart  
Deputy Secretary of Administration

*June 3, 2019*  
Date

Concur:

*[Redacted Signature]*

Robert L. Green, Secretary

*6/4/19*  
Date

**Approve:**

[Redacted Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
DOL's Secretary or Designee

Date

27 Jun 2019

**Approved for Legal Sufficiency and Form:**

[Redacted Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney General or Designee

Date

May 29, 2019