



## **District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer - Large Agency Division**

Washington, DC is the focal point of one of the most innovative and influential on-going public safety technology projects. Managed by District of Columbia's Office of the Chief Technology Officer the nation's first city-wide broadband wireless public safety network was deployed in 2004 and significantly expanded in 2005. The Wireless Accelerated Responder Network (WARN) operates under an experimental license for 700 MHz spectrum approved by the FCC and provides secure, dedicated broadband wireless service to multiple public safety agencies throughout the District of Columbia. WARN provides the wireless "transport layer" for such applications as access to law enforcement and public safety databases, criminal and motor vehicle queries, remote surveillance, chemical and biological weapon detection, bomb squad support, helicopter video transmission, in-ambulance pre-admission screening for emergency patients, and other uses critical to preventing attacks and responding to attacks swiftly and effectively.

Since implementation the network is used daily by public safety agencies within the District and is used as a interoperable data communications backbone during special events including the Inauguration of the President, security during the State of the Union Address, the 4th of July celebrations on the Mall, and during International Monetary Fund demonstrations.

Public safety organizations currently using WARN include eight District agencies; the Metropolitan Police Department, the Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department, the Emergency Management Agency, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Health (APRA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer. Federal WARN users include the United States Park Police, and United States Secret Service, the Federal Protective Service and the Department of Homeland Security. WARN is also used by an important NGO; the Metro Transit Police (WMATA).

Use of the WARN network by District first responders has minimal cost to participating agencies but provides a wealth of resources that are now available at true broadband speeds of up to 1.5 Mbs. When issued a PC card this network can be used by any public safety agency in a reasonably modern PC, and there is no requirement for any other hardware with the immediate benefits of more efficient interagency communications and public safety operations.