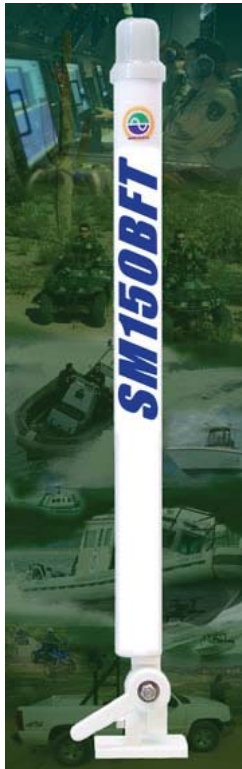


May the Blue Force be with us...Stealth makes its way to the high seas & borders

Investing in Science & Technology for homeland security



Seeing the bad guys without being seen is a great asset for those piloting a stealth fighter jet. The same concept is now moving from the skies to the seas and borders.



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Blue Force Tracking has entered the DHS Science & Technology Directorate vernacular due to S&T's investment in border and maritime security. Blue Force is the name for a communications system that combines satellite tracking, a secure radio transmitter and a radio system all in a compact 25" tall tube (shown at left).

The system enacts a sophisticated game of "hide-and-seek" that lets law enforcement and harbor patrols monitor other vessels without disclosing their own locations.

One key facet of Blue Force is Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS). Basically a two-way radio set-up, the extended use of MURS is the capability to encrypt one's movements. It allows the user to send false information about their

exact location.

A specific application is for the U.S. Coast Guard, added to the DHS family when it was formed after September 11, 2001. The Coast Guard and other branches of law enforcement must protect more than 88,000 miles of coastline in the U.S.

Through Blue Force, the Coast Guard and other operations will be better able to keep tabs on both civilian and commercial ships, and prevent dangerous goods or individuals from coming ashore.

While maritime security is a key application for Blue Force, it useful on dry land, too. In the hands of the military, it could track military formations and monitor those attempting to cross our borders by land.

In the hands of the public, Blue Force could even be used by a parent tracking their kids while out in the desert on a motorbike course.

When addressing DHS' use of technologies like Blue Force Tracking and the Directorate's systematic approach for border and maritime protection, DHS S&T Under Secretary Jay M. Cohen told the U.S. House of Representatives, "It's goal is to develop and integrate information management and sensor technologies necessary to prevent the entry of terrorists and their instruments of terror, criminals, and illegal aliens through out nation's borders."

This article is an excerpt from the U.S. Department of Security Student & Alumni Newsletter.

The Network serves students & alumni as current and past recipients of DHS funding and participants in DHS Student Programs.

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