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WHITE HOUSE

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US-VISIT award to Accenture ignites congressional battle

By JACOB GOODWIN

For a while, it looked as if defeating **Lockheed Martin Corp.** and **Computer Sciences Corp.** to win the lucrative multi-billion dollar prime contract for the US-VISIT program last June would prove to be the easy part of this procurement saga for the winner, **Accenture LLP.**, of Reston, VA.



MARK KAPLAN

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Accenture, the giant consulting firm, was selected for the contract award by the Department of Homeland Security on May 28, but now faces an

Environmental laws now apply to ports

Security grant applicants face new "green" rules in Round 4, says DHS

The Department of Homeland Security has notified America's seaports that all of their applications for the fourth round of port security grants will be subject to environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

That means that the potential environmental impact of the security enhancements proposed by the individual ports - such as the installation of perimeter fencing, video surveillance cameras, access control gates or high-powered lighting systems - will now be reviewed by the office of occupational safety, health and environment within DHS before any grant money is awarded. The Council on Environmental

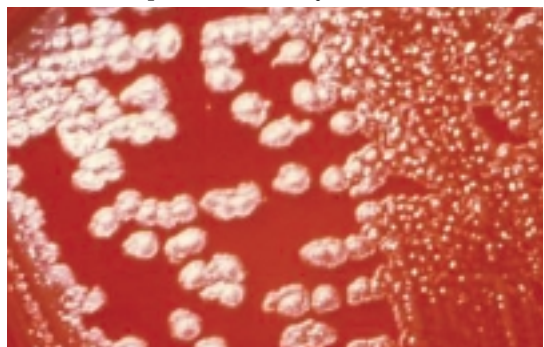
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U.S. now stockpiling growing vaccine list

By RANDY BARRETT

The U.S. Government is racing to stockpile enough vaccines to inoculate every citizen against potentially devastating biological threats, but it will take up to eight more years to develop and manufacture compounds capable of protecting all Americans.

At the top of the worry list are so-called



CDC

The U.S. will buy 75 million doses of anthrax vaccine

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Innovative approach to decontamination cuts collateral damage

By DAN LUZADDER

Decontamination technology - still a developing front in the war on terrorism - has made significant strides in the last few months toward faster and friendlier techniques that may rewrite the book on how to clear contaminants from biologic or chemical attacks in large buildings.

Those advances - focused on vaporized hydrogen peroxide (VHP) modified to effec-

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GSN Exclusive:

Optical threads might thwart counterfeiting of U.S. currency

In an effort to combat counterfeiting, the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing is planning to introduce into U.S. currency an "optically-variable" feature that will appear in small "windows" on certain paper bills that will change in appearance when the money is moved, rotated or angled.

The bureau of engraving, More on Page 51



A new dollar bill, with an optically variable thread security feature, might look like this

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Newbury Networks has software to detect an intruder trying to gain access to a wireless network

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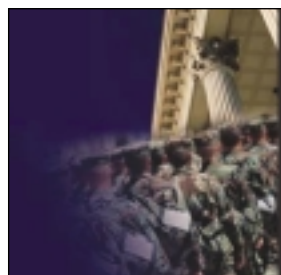
Progress in infra-red cameras and image processing have led a renaissance recently in videography

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Germany's Signalbau Huber has developed a system to inspect the underside of vehicles while they are moving

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VHP won't harm computers or sensitive equipment

U.S. Army and the Environmental Protection Agency in tests that will unfold during the next year. The VHP is delivered in an aerosol spray.

Scientists and industry officials say they've seen enough about VHP to know that the procedures offer the promise of effective decontamination in large venues, as well as response and completion times that can vastly limit disruptions typically caused by such incidents.

The nation's most vulnerable buildings – hospitals, military and emergency facilities, government centers and other high-profile targets – can be decontaminated with the new technology in a matter of days. Older technology can take months to do the same job, and carries with it the problems of extensive damage to interior surfaces and equipment, and environmental dangers.

For manufacturers, distributors and applicators, the new techniques may mean that research and development costs will be offset by the development of a potent new commercial market that will help speed refinements and also possibly bring the technology more quickly to war fighters on the battlefield, say those familiar with the work.

"This is a brand new industry," said Gerald Reis, president of Strategic Technology Enterprises, a subsidiary of Mentor, OH-based corporate giant **Steris Corporation**. "If you were to build this around crisis terrorism alone, there would be no business." But he said his company has been exploring how the technology can be used as a tool by private industry to respond quickly to such threats as "super bug" bacteria or contagious disease contamination in enclosed areas, the kind of incident that can bring business and social institutions to a grinding halt.

"This technology can be used against the next terrorist act, but also against some kind of terrible smallpox," Reis said. "We are concerned about the infectious disease world and things like SARS that killed people and made many sick. We've seen what these things do to the economies of whole counties."

He said they are currently looking at two methods of putting the product - and the techniques used to deploy it - into production.

"We will look at...deployment directly to the military, selling to them for their deployment, and also selling for commercial applications, like cruise lines, hotels, and airlines, which understand they cannot afford to have significant disruptions," says Reis. "If the public feels that there is not a process that can be immediately deployed, it undermines their confidence hiring these services.

That also has an economic impact."

Reis said Strategic Technology was born of the desire by Steris to bring its expertise in sterilization services for medical facilities to bear in dealing with the defense concerns raised by the events of September 11, and the anthrax attacks a month later.



Reis said company officials were meeting on the issue the day that planes flew into the Pentagon and World Trade Center buildings. Afterward, Reis said he found himself on a strange odyssey through the maze of government bureaucracy associated with the post 9/11 efforts to tighten national security and develop homeland security initiatives.

Reis' mission was to find the right people to help review the VHP technology, support its development, and promote the decontamination techniques within the government. In the lengthy process that followed, he hooked up with the U.S. Army's Edgewood Biologic and Chemical Center, a part of the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland, and a partnership was developed.

"It was kind of like Mr. Smith goes to Washington," Reis jokes now.

He said it took some 300 meetings with elected, appointed and administrative officials – and a successful demonstration of VHP's potential in the NBC television offices where anchorman Tom Brokaw had received dangerous anthrax-laced mail – before Strategic Technologies was able to get the work at Edgewood off the ground.

But Strategic's arrival, says Dr. Mark Brickhouse, who directs decontamination sciences at the Center, turned out to be a significant event, one that led to a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement, known as a "CRDA," under which proprietary agreements on research and development between the company

and the Army were hammered out.

"Prior to this effort, there was almost no new research and development in gas-based technology for decontamination," Brickhouse said, "and there was a need for that for interiors or aircraft, or places with sensitive equipment," he said.

"Steris was able to engage congressional funding in 2003 and 2004, which has provided support that we needed," Brickhouse added. "Since then, we've scaled up demonstrations in large scale engineering facilities, working with chemical and biological agents...and developed a new generation of hardware for production and delivery."

Brickhouse said the Army already had been exploring VHP to improve liquid-based technology that has been in use for almost half a century.

"While effective, all of those products are very corrosive, very aggressive, and cause materials compatibility problems," he explained.

"The Center has become quite active in identifying new chemical approaches that are equally effective, but more environmentally effective."

Vaporized hydrogen peroxide is delivered in an aerosol spray from portable and stationary equipment that can be quickly



VHP is moving from hospital settings to large interiors

moved to a building location, Brickhouse said. The aerosol allows the highly atomized chemical to be sprayed throughout a room by workers, who wear respiratory and other protection from contaminants and the spray. The byproduct of the spray, however, is water and oxygen.

Reis said that while the process can damage some paper products, it won't harm computers and other sensitive equipment.

Until research and modifications in VHP, the most recent anti-contaminate

weapons in the U.S. arsenal had been chlorine dioxide, which was used to decontaminate building and other facilities from the anthrax attacks; DS2, a heavily stockpiled chemical developed in the 1960s; and chlorine bleach, first deployed during World War I.

Vaporized hydrogen peroxide – long used in hospitals to sterilize surgical instruments and to decontaminate small, enclosed areas like surgical theaters – began to draw more attention as the collaboration between Strategic Technologies and the Army grew. Over the past year, using modifications to materials developed by Steris, scientists at Aberdeen were able to enhance VHP's level of effectiveness against chemical agents to almost match its biologic capabilities. That, Brickhouse said, has helped him continue exploration of the technology for its possible military use. His evaluation is continuing, he said.

Speed of the application of VHP, the time it takes to work and the fact that it can most often be used without damaging equipment and building surfaces has encouraged those worried about responding to attacks in vulnerable targets, such as hospitals, which must keep running and return to full functionality as quickly as possible after an attack.

That opportunity, say those who promote VHP, is primarily what separates the new technology from its chief competitor, chlorine dioxide, which is also very effective against spores and chemical agents, but can heavily damage the inside of buildings. Environmental concerns have pushed the EPA to look harder at VHP as well.

Brickhouse said the Center was encouraged by the fact that vaporized hydrogen peroxide breaks down into water and oxygen, which vastly reduces the environmental impact compared with chlorine-based approaches.

Reis said his company's journey toward a cooperative research and development pact with Edgewood took a long and winding road.

"The country, many can say, was ill prepared for biological attacks," said Reis. "We have made a huge degree of progress since then, but there is still work to do."

Now he and others are looking forward to the creation of new opportunities, and to some public service as well.

"I believe this will be won in the science labs, with academia, private industry and government, military and civilians all working to solve these issues," Reis said. "We view this not just as a business opportunity, but a true labor of love. This team, and this corporation, really feel that we are doing something for the national good." ■