

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 8/30/06
Department Name: FIRE
Department No.: 031
Agenda Date: 9/12/06
Placement: Administrative
Estimate Time: 5
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: John M. Scherrei
Fire Chief

STAFF Bruce Carter, Manager, Fire/OES, 681-5559
CONTACT: Mitch Evans, Communications Manager, General Services 681-5590

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of Competition in Purchase of Specialized Trailer Tower Units
for Communications Interoperability Units

Recommendation:

That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Purchasing Manager to procure three (3) Trailer Tower Units from the Aluma Tower Company, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$220,000 under the terms and conditions of the State Homeland Security Grant Program without being required to conduct a formal bid process.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with Goal No. 2. A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

Pursuant to County Code Section 2-39, we are requesting your Board to waive the requirement for a competitive bid for the purchase of specialized Trailer Tower Units to be used in conjunction with interoperable communication equipment that will enhance communication capabilities among emergency response agencies throughout the county. The Aluma Tower Company trailers are the same trailer tower units used by Ventura County and will therefor facilitate mutual aid activities and interoperational capabilities between counties.

The Aluma Tower Company, not a local vendor, is the only maker that incorporates 6063-T832 and 6061-T6 aluminum alloys, and tungsten inert gas (TIG) welding into the construction process. The crank towers employ a unique tilting base and crank assembly mounted onto a lightweight trailer that can be towed without the need for a heavy-duty specialty vehicle. These features combine to create a safe and effective trailer tower unit. This specialized aluminum tower provides substantial weight savings in support of technician safety, portability and system longevity. The trailers will house highly specialized ACU-1000

communications interoperability equipment and are manufactured to specifically facilitate mobile communications capabilities, including an attached tower to provide elevation for remote antennas. Aluma Tower Company produces this lightweight, durable, trailer that may be towed by many different vehicles negating the need for a heavy-duty towing vehicle. The communications interoperability system requires that it be able to be deployable by one technician who must transport the tower units to tactical positions such as mountain or ridge tops, raise the tower unity. Once deployed, the trailer interoperability units will allow various federal, state and local agencies to communicate directly in the field.

Mandates and Service Levels:

The purchase of the Aluma Tower Company Trailer Units will enhance communications interoperability throughout Santa Barbara County in and among mutual aid agencies. There will be three trailers deployed in Santa Barbara, Lompoc and Santa Maria offering enhancing operational deployment and allowing radio technicians to patch multiple agency radio frequencies, including cellular phones, together so that different response agencies are able to communicate on a shared communications platform. Locating these trailers at three different areas will alleviate problems that may arise with damage to transportation corridors during disasters. Communications staff, Search and Rescue and other city radio technicians will be trained on this equipment. These trailers may be requested by any jurisdiction within Santa Barbara County and other mutual aid requests.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Funding for the Aluma Tower Company Trailer Units would be from the State Homeland Security Grant Program. A budget revision is in process to cover this \$220,000 purchase price.

Special Instructions:

Certified Copy of Minute Order to:

- Rose Pueschel, Santa Barbara County Fire
- John McMillin, Purchasing Agent
- Office of Emergency Services

Concurrence:

- County Executive Officer
- County Counsel
- Purchasing Manager