



HARVARD Kennedy School

ASH INSTITUTE

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GLOBAL MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS WINS INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AWARD

Harvard University's Ash Institute Honors Initiative of US Department of Transportation

Cambridge, Mass., – September 9, 2008 – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School today announced the Global Maritime Domain Awareness Program as a winner of the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards for its efforts in enhancing levels of safety and economic stability in the global seas. Developed by the Volpe Center of the US Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, the program provides an unprecedented level of visibility into transit and port activity. The movements of more than 10,000 vessels from over 40 nations are tracked and updated in real-time. The program was honored at tonight's Innovations in American Government Awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., and will receive \$100,000 towards dissemination and replication across the country.

At the heart of the program is its Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS), an easily scalable and accessible web platform which consolidates information transmitted from commercial ship Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders with data from shore side receivers. As AIS transponders are required of all vessels of a certain size, users can access a host of AIS information about such vessels including speed and direction; cargo type; location of embarkation and destination as well as ship type and responsibility. The system's built in analysis tools facilitate easy identification of data anomalies that could signify suspicious activity. Unlike former cumbersome systems which took hours to update, MSSIS provides a near real-time view of vessel activity, updating every 10 seconds. Information is unclassified and easily accessible with a user name and password.

MSSIS' full display of maritime traffic activity enhances efficient surveillance and management while eliminating costly ship board inspections and fly over surveillance. In addition to resource and time savings, the system has proven instrumental in improving global sea safety. It has aided in reducing

both human and contraband smuggling and curbed piracy activity. Due to the data sharing nature of the system, it supports multi-national naval exercises such as NATO's Operation Active Endeavour. Moreover, officials from many partnering nations use the system to enforce environmental and safety regulations, prevent oil spills, and reduce port congestion and vessel collisions.

Called a "wiki on the waves," the program fosters an unparalleled level of cooperation among participating nations. Since the Global Maritime Domain Awareness' inception two years ago, its participating membership has expanded from five to 40 countries with another 40 nations currently evaluating participation. Nations in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North and South America, act as maritime partners, sharing data and responsibility of surveillance and management. The system often witnesses atypical cooperation among unlikely candidates: Turkey and Greece as well as Pakistan and India frequently share pertinent maritime data.

"MSSIS represents how applying the tools and transparency in the information age can enable unprecedented cooperation among not only US federal agencies, but also among global nations to allow exceptional visibility, security, and management of global freight shipments," said Paul Brubaker, administrator of the US Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration. "The Volpe Center and the US Department of Transportation are proud to have played a role in developing this critical transformation program."

"Combining technological expertise with diplomatic savvy, the Global Maritime Domain Awareness program works with partners all over the globe to generate real-time pictures of maritime activity," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Awards at Harvard Kennedy School. "Its practices not only advance security on international seaways, but also show how innovation can arise from the creative and collaborative use of existing assets."

Since 1986, the Ash Institute's Innovations in American Government Awards Program at Harvard Kennedy School has honored 187 federal, state, and local government agencies through Ford Foundation support. In highlighting exemplary models of government innovation, the Program drives continued progress in improving the quality of life of citizens and encourages scholarly research and teaching cases at Harvard University and institutions worldwide. Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas, and have served as harbingers of today's reform strategies or as forerunners to state and federal legislation.

About the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Institute fosters creative and effective government problem-solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. Asia Programs, a school-wide initiative integrating Asia-related activities, joined the Ash Institute in July 2008. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the Institute. Additional information about the Ash Institute is available at www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu. Applicants for the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards are encouraged to apply at www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu.

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