

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Homeland Security awards \$100,000 grant to Tahoe tech company

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The Department of Homeland Security has awarded The Right Stuff of Tahoe a \$100,000 grant, company president Laurence E. LaForge said.

The Northern Nevada technology business is trying to develop a new generation of computerized, secure sensors and controllers to be used in electric power grids, networks and pipelines that transport gas, oil and water.

The grant is from the Office of the Secretary of Homeland Security, its most recent solicitation for Small Business Innovative Research, LaForge said.

LaForge, an electrical engineer, is principal researcher for the "Crypto-Secure Remote Terminal Unit for New and Retrofit Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition" project, LaForge said.

"We've got a box, and the box will be controlling the valves and the shut on and shut off switches for electricity," LaForge said. "What we are trying to do is make it so the box is not the weak link in the security system (for electric grids).

In early December of 2003, The Right Stuff of Tahoe signed a six-month \$100,000, contract with the Air Force Research Laboratory, acting on behalf of the Defense Department, LaForge said.

"Credit Mr. Myron Hecht for his contributions to the initial concept," LaForge said. "We are furthermore privileged to tap the expertise of a recognized leader in secure industrial automation, Mr. Dale Peterson. We are also fortunate to draw on the considerable experience and proven track record of Mr. Chris Kurtz."

Hecht is presently with the Aerospace Corp. of El Segundo, Calif. Kurtz is President of CIS Technology, based in Reno.

The relatively new Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency will administer the contract under the banner of "Advanced Secure Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Related Distributed Control Systems."

HSARPA taps high-tech firms to develop infrastructure protection against terrorist threats while maintaining the convenience and cost savings of remote sensors and actuators, LaForge said.

The Right Stuff of Tahoe proposed a Crypto-Secure, Modular, Remote Terminal Unit. The device "will provide both a secure gateway function and secure Internet protocols for interaction with either central monitoring station SCADA display systems, or with Web-based operator interfaces," LaForge said.

LaForge is a graduate of MIT and McGill University. He also is an adjunct professor of Computer Science and Mathematics with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

The Right Stuff of Tahoe makes and sells computer programs that create and read digital stationery, using standard inks and stock paper with its RightCardWare.

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