



**Project SafetyNet:
A Satellite Broadband Proposal for Improving Rural Public Safety
and Prompting Economic Recovery**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposal Summary:

Skycasters, LLC is an American-owned and operated Satellite Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Akron, Ohio. Founded in 2001, we operate our teleport locally and do not outsource any of our operations overseas. Our proposal will bring lifesaving and economy-stimulating satellite broadband Internet to public safety organizations in unserved portions of rural America. We are seeking a \$5.1 million grant to improve public safety and prompt economic recovery for 37 million Americans.

The goal of Project SafetyNet is twofold:

- 1) To arm rural public safety organizations (police, fire, search and rescue, and EMS) with the technology to provide vital, lifesaving services, thereby protecting American lives and property.** The beneficiaries of our proposal are among our nation's most vulnerable when it comes to natural and manmade disasters and acts of terrorism. We have already identified our beneficiaries, and they have told us that the vast distances and limited infrastructure in the areas that they serve often leaves them with no viable alternative but to use amateur (HAM) radio for vital communications. This proposal will allow satellite Internet-enabled teams to effectively communicate with command headquarters and other state, local and county agencies, providing more efficient coordination of efforts; and

- 2) To prompt rural economic recovery** by creating jobs and safer communities through more effective and accessible technology. For example, one of the beneficiaries of this proposal (located in FEMA Region 4) estimates a positive economic impact of \$3.4 million to his community. This life and property saving technology will also promote economic stability through improved fire fighting, police response, weather warnings, and homeland security in areas with manufacturing and other business facilities.

Our objective is to provide 80 communities and counties across 17 states with a 2-year program of free satellite broadband Internet, along with free business-grade equipment (in one of two mobile equipment configurations). We will also provide no-cost training at our headquarters in Akron. Sustainability beyond the initial 2-year period is made possible by the use of non-proprietary equipment that works on any iDirect network. (iDirect is supported by hundreds of satellite ISPs and is the standard of the U.S. military.)



In total, the beneficiaries of this funding serve a population of more than 37 million across a geographic area of 283,401 square miles. The \$5.1 million grant we are seeking will provide these critical benefits at a nominal cost of 13.6 cents per citizen served.

How our services will be used:

Emergency situations involving command and control rely on GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) in order to effectively serve and protect. Such applications require robust Internet connectivity. We have already identified beneficiaries that represent a wide cross-section of the United States. They have certified that the services provided by this proposal are for rural use in accordance with RUS guidelines. They have told us that they currently have no remote Internet access for emergency preparedness or deployment. They also shared with us how the proposed services will empower them in protecting and serving their communities, including:

- Homeland Security emergency preparedness – readiness and drills. “We’ve never even tried preparing without an Internet connection, because we simply could not function without it.”
- Mobility during missing and lost person incidents
- Border security and anti-drug efforts
- Improved communications during emergencies with state and county entities
- Vital coverage in a 42-square-mile service area that currently has none, and that includes a nuclear power plant and an Indian Reservation

For additional specific uses and information, please refer to Attachment Q, which includes copies of the profiles and certifications provided to us by the beneficiaries.

The number of unserved rural premises to be served nationally:

The total population served by these agencies is 37,583,671 throughout a 283,401 square mile area.

The extent to which unserved rural premises will benefit under their proposals:

In addition to serving each beneficiaries target population, a great many of the agencies have also pledged to take their mobile unit into neighboring communities during disaster response efforts, police actions and life-and-death medical emergencies. We have spoken with representatives of the beneficiary organizations, every single one of whom has attested to the fact that this service provides a potentially life saving technology.

The amount and length of any proposed discounted service:

Satellite broadband Internet service at \$0 (no cost) for a period of two years. Our business-grade, iDirect-compatible equipment (which will also be provided at no cost) has an expected durability of 5+ years for sustainability beyond the two-year term. In the spirit of



true American capitalism, the non-proprietary equipment will allow beneficiaries to shop competitively for a satellite ISP of their choice at the end of the two-year term. We are prepared to begin deployment within 6 weeks of funding approval, with total implementation being complete in 6 to 8 months.

Service packages offered:

We will provide a 2-year Basic Service Package with all required equipment, in either a fixed or mobile configuration. Our SkyPortable mobile unit can be easily and quickly transported to the service area by common carrier, while our Mobile Satellite Trailer can be towed by car or truck to areas in need of help. After working with our beneficiaries to analyze their requirements, we are proposing the deployment of 70 MST trailers, 9 SkyPortables and 1 fixed unit.

The operational relationship between the applicant and any co-applicants:

This is a national application with no co-applicants.

How the project promotes rural economic development, supports persistent poverty counties, demonstrates cost effectiveness, and offers low-cost service options:

- **Rural Economic Development.** This project will create 266 new jobs. It will also create safer communities through more effective and accessible emergency/disaster communications technology. Protection and emergency service to manufacturing facilities and businesses will also be greatly improved. The result may help to stem the flight of individuals, families *and businesses* to larger cities in search of more advanced technology and modern conveniences.
- **Support of persistent poverty counties.** The proposed services will support **155 persistent poverty counties** as defined by USDA ERS.
- **Cost-effectiveness.** The cost-effectiveness of this proposed project is implicit in the projected cost breakdown per citizen served: a \$5.1 million expenditure that provides 2 years of services to a population of 37,586,371 at a cost of 13.6 cents per person.

This is a proposal proffered in the spirit of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Funding this project will result in the creation of 266 jobs within the geographic areas served, while bringing vital life saving technology to America's heartland. Your investment in our project will arm our nation's finest and bravest to protect millions of American lives every day for the next two years and beyond. We look forward to a positive response, and we thank you for your consideration.