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Since 1971, the law enforcement, fire, EMS and security communities have relied on the Law Enforcement Standards Office (OLES) for guidance on procurement, deployment, applications, operations and training decisions. OLES, located at NIST in Gaithersburg, Maryland, assists U.S. Federal, State, and local agencies ensure that the safety and emergency equipment they need and rely on is safe, dependable, effective, and based on sound scientific technologies.

OLES accomplishes their important national security mission primarily by developing equipment performance standards, measurement tools, operating procedures, and usage guidelines that guarantee that public agencies' selection criteria for their equipment procurement, deployment, operations, and training applications are the best in the world.

As part of the continuing mission, OLES in collaboration with the NIST National Center for Standards and Certification Information is currently deploying an Internet pilot project to measure the U.S. emergency and first responder communities' need for documentary standards at the various government levels.

OLES is funding the project to run during April, May, and June 2011 to offer U.S. first responders free access to documentary standards published by ASTM International, IEEE, and the National Fire Protection Association. These three standards-developing organizations were chosen because they publish a large number of responder-relevant standards. U.S. Federal government standards and guidance, such as the Code of Federal Regulations and Department of Defense Military Specifications, will be included.

The OLES project features approximately 300 standards and OLES will analyze information on the agencies that use the documents. This pilot project is restricted to individuals with a ".gov" or ".mil" email address in order to profile which agencies have the greatest demand. OLES will share the data gathered through the pilot with the agencies as well as with the standards-developing organizations.

This pilot will contribute to a better understanding of those in the Federal, State and local first responder communities who need access to standards, what types of standards used most frequently, and how OLES can better serve this community with future research and development.

OLES is partnering with SAI Global Inc. to offer this pilot. SAI Global Inc. provides aggregated information access services for standards, handbooks, and legislative and property publications worldwide.

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