National Defense University

Fort Lesley J. McNair, 260 5th Ave. Washington DC 20319-5066

April 18, 2011

Mr. Charles Manto, CEO
Instant Access Networks, LLC
216 Tawes, FSU
101 Braddock Rd
Frostburg, MD 21532

Dear Mr. Manto and prospective sponsors of the Secure Grid '11 Preparation Exercise:

The National Defense University and NORTHCOM are proposing to sponsor a first-ever comprehensive public and private sector tabletop exercise on the effects of a space weather disaster on the North American electric grid (with a supporting preparatory conference) to address a nationwide disaster. We appreciate your efforts at gathering additional participants and sponsors to help support and plan this event tentatively scheduled for September 2011.

Organizations that have participated in past NDU energy security games and are expected to participate this year include the White House, Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Energy, key military organizations, state and local governments and private sector infrastructure owners and operators from the US, Canada and Mexico. This group will work through the implications of long-term infrastructure failure with the goals of discovering ways to mitigate such a disaster, improve sustainability of communities and protect communications between communities while enhancing energy and food security.

As you know, space-weather experts have changed their prediction of the effects of the 100-year solar storm from likely being a week-long blackout across the East Coast through Chicago to a national one that could easily be year-long, with restoration taking four–ten years. This announcement prompted a tabletop exercise in March 2010, sponsored by NOAA in Colorado, followed by an emergency management bulletin nationwide. These issues were addressed in the Grid Act (HB5026) passed by unanimous consent in the US House of Representatives on 9 June 2010 and in a currently proposed bill, the Shield Act.

A severe solar storm would most likely be a global event. A manmade electromagnetic pulse (EMP), especially from a high-altitude nuclear burst, can have a regional or continental-wide

impact on power grids and interoperable communications systems required by first responders and controls needed by infrastructure. What technical systems initially survive would eventually stop working when their power systems fail from either manmade or natural EMP. Simultaneous EMP hits on interdependent technology and infrastructure will create massive simultaneous cascading failures that have not been sufficiently addressed.

Comprehensive planning by the public and private sector for high-impact low-frequency scenarios such as these is urgently needed. We believe that expanded participation of stakeholders will make the work already underway more useful to the nation as a whole. Please feel free to have any of your prospective sponsors or participants contact me at their earliest convenience.

Cordially,

Richard Andres

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