**ELECTRONIC JAMMING**

It was announced from New Mexico on 27 July that the (US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) is working to combat electronic jamming of first responders’ radio communications systems by enhancing jamming prevention, detection and mitigation technologies.

A DHS S&T First Responder Electronic Jamming Exercise took place on 16 July at the White Sand Missile Range in New Mexico, where DHS S&T hosted first responders from more than 40 federal, state and local agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, US Customs and Border Protection, and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

During this exercise, responder organizations conducted emergency response scenarios, while deliberate electronic jamming disabled some of their communications. Data collected identified the systems that were susceptible to jamming or interference, how severe the impact was on mission response, and the effectiveness of system defences.

Said Under Secretary for S&T Dr Reginald Brothers: ‘*Electronic jamming equipment interferes with vital communication and delays emergency response times. Often, this illegal jamming is used to mask illicit activities, such as drug and weapons smuggling and human trafficking. Electronic jammers pose a serious threat to our responders, their missions, our communities and our borders, and DHS S&T continues to work diligently to mitigate this threat.*’

Subject matter experts from academia and the private sector were also on hand to add their expertise and equipment to the exercise, including drones and jammers. Data collected from this exercise will be used to enhance anti-jamming technologies and inform policy to ensure resilient requirements for first responders’ communications systems, it is understood.