

Video Arraignments - Phase 1 of 2

FY2001 Request: \$510,000
Reference No: 6143

AP/AL: Appropriation **Project Type:** Renewal and Replacement
Category: Public Protection
Location: Statewide **Contact:** Kenneth E. Bischoff
House District: Statewide (HD 1-40) **Contact Phone:** (907)465-4336
Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2000 - 06/30/2002

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

Phase One of this project requests funds in FY2001 to replace the outmoded video arraignment systems in Anchorage, as a new jail is constructed, and in Fairbanks, as the new courthouse is constructed. Phase Two requests funds in FY2002 to expand the use of this successful system by installing a new system in the Kenai Court.

Funding:	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	Total
Gen Fund	\$510,000	\$130,000					\$640,000
Total:	\$510,000	\$130,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$640,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased Project	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	5,000	0
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	5,000	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This project will prevent cost increases related to moving prisoners between the courts and jails and back again for arraignments by accomplishing these arraignments by video & audio links. These projects will also increase court security by limiting prisoners' opportunities for escapes. There has been no prior recent history of funding for these projects.

Project Description/Justification:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Phase One of this project requests funds to purchase replacement video arraignment systems in Anchorage and Fairbanks, and to expand those systems to encompass additional court rooms and defendant rooms to help address the increased prisoner activity. These replacement and expanded systems will be similar to the successful, but now inadequate and outmoded, systems employed at the 6th Avenue Correctional Facility in Anchorage and the system in Fairbanks. The purchase will involve the acquisition of video and audio equipment.

Phase Two of this project will purchase a new system for use in the Kenai court. This will take place in FY2002.

PROJECT NEED STATEMENT

Video arraignment systems eliminate the need to physically move prisoners between the jail and the court, which is costly for escorting law enforcement personnel and which creates an otherwise unnecessary security risk. Without the existing systems in Anchorage and Fairbanks, Judicial Services personnel would be forced to transport prisoners approximately 20,000 times from jail to court during a typical year.

In 1984, the Alaska State Troopers and the Courts began using video links in Fairbanks to conduct arraignments. Following that operation's success, in 1991, a video link system was established in Anchorage. Both these systems have been operationally successful, but are now antiquated and are in need of replacement to control both the increased use

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and the anticipated increase in the number and cost of repairs. The primary concern is that failures of the system have begun to take place that endanger the court's acceptance of the links as an inexpensive and more secure method of arraigning prisoners.

A new courthouse is being built in Fairbanks and a new jail in Anchorage. The Fairbanks courthouse is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2001; the Anchorage Jail is scheduled for completion in the winter of 2001. As these projects are completed, it is a cost effective and efficient time to replace this aging equipment. This timely replacement action will eliminate the need for installing replacement cables, etc. at different times; one during construction and another during equipment replacement. An additional problem with the Fairbanks link is that it is a microwave system. The location of the new courthouse will prevent the use of the existing system since other structures interrupt the line of sight transmission. Fiber optics lines must be used in this location as they are in Anchorage.

A standard video link requires three cameras, two large monitors, and three small monitors. The normal defendant room needs one camera, two large monitors, microphone, and speakers to tie into the court's audio system. Additionally, there is a "codeck" instrument that routes the signals to the various locations and telephones for the attorneys to speak to their clients. When the courthouse in Fairbanks and the new jail in Anchorage are completed, there will be six courtrooms and four defendant rooms that will need to be connected by video. In Kenai, there will be one additional courtroom and one defendant room.

DOCUMENTATION OF ESTIMATED CAPITAL COST

A cost of \$640,000 for both phases is based upon DPS experience with the Anchorage 6th Avenue Correctional Facility and Fairbanks Video Arraignments projects. Items of equipment to be purchased include video cameras, monitors, audio equalizers, audio mixers, video recorders, microphones, switches, wires and fiber optic cables.

Phase One: Anchorage and Fairbanks - FY2001

Anchorage - replacement and expansion:

3 Courtrooms (2 in Boney Court & 1 in Nesbitt)	\$150,000	
1 Shared in Federal Court (7th Ave.)	25,000	
3 Defendant rooms (2 are new)	90,000	
1 Shared defendant room	15,000	
1 Codeck router	<u>50,000</u>	
Anchorage subtotal		\$330,000

Fairbanks - replacement and expansion:

2 Courtrooms in the new State Court Building (1 courtroom is new)	100,000	
1 Defendant room	30,000	
1 Codeck router	<u>50,000</u>	
Fairbanks subtotal		<u>180,000</u>

Phase One Total 510,000

Phase Two - Kenai Court - FY2002

New system:

1 Courtroom in the Kenai Court Building	50,000	
1 Defendant room	30,000	
1 Codeck router	<u>50,000</u>	

Phase Two Total 130,000

TOTAL (Phases One & Two) 640,000

ANALYSIS OF ESTIMATED OPERATION COSTS

There will be no increased operating cost over the existing system in Anchorage. The Fairbanks system will now involve

State of Alaska Capital Project Summary

Department of Public Safety

Governor's 2001 Capital Budget

Reference No: 6143

1/10/11 9:40:25 AM

Page 2

Released December 15, 1999

Video Arraignments - Phase 1 of 2**FY2001 Request: \$510,000**
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paying for the use of a fiber optic line, estimated to be \$5,000 per year (Phase One). The operating costs for the new Kenai system (Phase Two) will be approximately \$6,000 per year based upon previous experience with the existing systems. This involves maintenance agreements and repairs and maintenance on the equipment and utility line charges. Unless the existing Anchorage and Fairbanks systems are replaced in FY01, their repair and maintenance costs will undoubtedly rise as the systems exceed their economic useful lives and continue to fail at an ever increasing rate, requiring costly emergency repairs.

IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The possibility of leasing this equipment was examined, but rejected due to high cost and the inability of the AST operating budget to sustain such a cost. The only other alternative is for AST to physically move prisoners between the jail and court for arraignment. This is far too costly and impractical given the Division's current staffing levels. The potential for escapes would also increase significantly without video arraignments.