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## Integrated approach needed for public security - SAP

**JOHANNESBURG — 19 June, 2006** — Trends in public security are changing – moving to a more integrated, holistic approach, which is best enabled by standards-based, future-proof information technology solutions that don't require vast additional investment by governments.

So said SAP industry director for public security in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Sean O'Brien, who hosted a public security information day in South Africa during May. The meeting was attended by various government agencies, including the State Information Technology Agency (SITA), and local and international SAP business partners.

"Industry analysts, governments and our own dedicated public security team are all coming to the same conclusion – that there are certain aspects of public security that are common to all public security disciplines, from border management, terrorism, and natural disasters to emergency response, immigration and intelligence.

"For instance, fundamental to all public security activities is identity management. From car licences to passports and national identity documents, your identity defines your entitlements, your nationality, and the legitimacy of you being in any given place at any given time.

"So identity management should be at the core of all public security systems. And that means having all your security systems sharing the same information rather than duplicating it in multiple systems where an update in one system doesn't cascade through to all the others."

O'Brien pointed out that most governments already have vast sums invested in proprietary security management systems that simply can't keep pace with either the proliferation of threats or the changing nature of those threats.

"Most bespoke systems simply weren't designed to cope with biometrics and new threats nor were they designed to cope with an increasingly integrated and globalised economy. This means that huge increases in the volumes of people, trade and information passing through borders creates more opportunity for criminal and terrorist activity whilst reducing the capacity of public security organizations to focus upon threats and priorities.

"The new discipline of integrated public security management, however, merges best practices within an overall public security framework - and then seeks solutions which are based upon standard software with industry-specific best practice and enhancement.

"Having worked with public security for 20 years and spent a lot of time talking to government and security professionals, we sense that a fresh and more radical approach to tackling security and safety issues is required. Certainly, the consensus is that the market landscape will not be the same in five years - with innovation and new entrants like SAP providing the capability for increased public safety and security in this new threat reality, whilst working within a limited investment environment."

O'Brien believes there are four key ways, based on standards-based technology, to achieve that ideal.

The first is early awareness of potential threats, which entails the seamless collation, synchronisation, analysis and dissemination of public security related information and Intelligence in near realtime.

The second is preparedness. That requires best practice processes and architectures that enable command and control, information and resource management, logistics, scenario planning and risk mitigation functions to be fully integrated, co-ordinated and operations-ready.

Third is responsiveness, enabled by common, interoperable and collaborative technology solutions that improve the co-ordination, flexibility and adaptability of incident and disaster first responses.

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And fourth is resilience – the ability of a community to recover from an incident or disaster. That ability is enhanced by the speed and efficiency with which technology enables effective deployment of resources and appropriate consequence and investigative case management.

“The goal is to get rid of the current fragmentation of public security activities by understanding and then exploiting the touch points so as to provide a coherent capability that is always focused on the right issues in the most appropriate, most effective way,” O’Brien said. “If you can achieve that, your total cost of ownership of security systems will drop and your return on investment will increase – as will public security.”

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