



Pegasus Report

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SafeCity Initiative & Pegasus form Strategic Alliance for Taxpayer-Friendly Crime-Fighting

The SafeCity Initiative and the Pegasus Program recently announced a strategic alliance to fight crime in a very taxpayer-friendly way by bridging criminal justice system gaps.

By working together over the past few months, the two organizations have found that they share a common objective of fighting crime in a taxpayer-friendly way. They came to the conclusion that citizens, taxpayers and public safety would be served by working together to expand their success in Central Mississippi throughout the State of Mississippi.

SafeCity is a transparent and independent non-profit working to improve public safety and fight crime in Mississippi. **Mark McCreery, SafeCity's Chairman**, said "Crime and the perception of crime are major barriers to building the City of Jackson and surrounding communities in Mississippi. One of the major problems of fighting crime is the many gaps that exist between the various institutions in the criminal justice system, gaps which reduce accountability. SafeCity very much believes that every Sheriff's Office and Police Department in Mississippi needs to participate in Pegasus, with all local agencies able to access data, and contributing data wherever that makes sense."

Sheriff Tommy Ferrell, Chairman of the Pegasus Advisory Board, emphasized that "Each agency sharing information only makes the entire system work more efficiently, thus serving public safety. The public assumes that such systems exist in every law enforcement agency, but, of course, that assumption is incorrect."

Lee Colwell, President of the Pegasus Research Foundation, which leads the Pegasus Program, said, "Seemingly daunting efforts began to succeed when SafeCity initiated a project with **Commissioner Chris Epps of the MS Department of Corrections** to enable all law enforcement personnel to access data in a confidential manner through the Pegasus System."

The strategic alliance has the vision and goal of an all-inclusive

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system which contains such information as outstanding arrest warrants, protective orders, child support orders, sexual offender registrations, probation status and drug treatment, which will be available to the entire law enforcement community, including District Attorneys and other prosecutors. Information about prior arrests, convictions, parole, bail, etc., is crucial to making decisions about disposition options such as sentencing and supervision requirements.

Mr. McCreery went on to say, "I am very enthusiastic about Pegasus because it is so effective, and yet, it is a taxpayer-friendly solution. We are using our current database systems more effectively by allowing outside law enforcement to use what have traditionally been 'closed' operating systems. This is a tremendous waste of resources and does not lend itself to any standards of interoperability. One point has become very clear — it is a much better economic decision to make all these different law enforcement and public safety systems work TOGETHER through integration — whether voice or data — than to buy a whole new system. We simply do not have the resources to start from scratch."

Pegasus Positioned to Help on Pandemic FI Preparedness

Last November, Federal authorities released the HHS Pandemic Influenza Plan, which urged all levels of government to prepare for the possibility of an avian flu pandemic. State and local government were urged to take steps to assure continuity of business and government in the event 40% of the work force stays at home and significant levels of death and illness disrupt everyday life.

Local law enforcement's role before and during an avian flu pandemic has become a matter of intense interest among law enforcement and public health leaders. Because pandemic flu may require unprecedented levels of cooperation between public health, law enforcement and others in enforcing travel restrictions, distributing food and medicine, transporting the ill, and providing security for healthcare facilities, leaders at the local level have begun planning ahead for a pandemic.

The Pegasus Program is poised to help local agencies get prepared. Pegasus Research Foundation's **Dr. Lee Colwell** has lectured on law enforcement pandemic flu preparedness at the National Executives Institute, Major City Chiefs and first responder groups, and on-point articles authored by him have been printed in [Sheriff Magazine](#) and [Police Chief Magazine](#). Agencies interested in discussing pandemic flu preparedness are invited to **contact Dr. Colwell at 501-975-9111 or Pegasus Project Executive Dennis Kelly at 504-324-1884.**