

HTX Labs Secures SBIR Phase II Contract with the US Air Force 821 Contingency Response Squadron (CRS)

HTX Labs, creator of the EMPACT® Immersive Learning Platform, has been awarded a new SBIR Phase II contract with US Air Force 821 Contingency Response Squadron.

HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, November 29, 2021 / EINPresswire.com/ -- HTX Labs, creator of the [EMPACT® Immersive Learning Platform](#), announced it has been awarded a new Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase II contract with the US Air Force 821 Contingency Response Squadron (CRS).

This SBIR contract seeks to further expand the EMPACT Platform to better enable the development, creation, deployment, and measurement of realistic, immersive environments and interactive, virtual training content in support of rapid global mobility operations for the 821 CRS.

The 821 Contingency Response Squadron encompasses 29 individual U.S. Air Force specialties, providing the fundamental cadre for worldwide deployment of expeditionary tasks specific to airfield operations within the [621 Contingency Response Wing](#) (CRW). CRS teams provide highly skilled, adaptable airmen, ready to deploy within 12 hours “alert time frame” or notification to support transitory mobility requirements, increasing the response options and expanding the footprint of Air Mobility Command (AMC) across the globe. From wartime taskings to disaster relief like hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods, the 821 CRS extends AMC’s reach to deploying people, equipment, and airpower to locations where air infrastructure may not exist.

“The Air Force needs a more effective way to train and plan for Contingency Response missions,



particularly in the hands of expeditionary units at the tactical level. The capability to rapidly create large-scale, geospatially accurate virtual environments will be a game-changer for mission planning and preparedness.”, said MSgt Bryan K Rodvold, USAF AMC 321 AMOS/DOP.

HTX Labs’ primary goal with this project is to adapt the EMPACT Immersive Learning Platform to enable airmen to rapidly create large-scale, geospatially accurate virtual environments, augment and annotate those environments with 3D objects, and other digital media, and save and publish these environments for use in mission planning. Airmen can then leverage these environments using EMPACT Studio’s self-authoring content creation tools to create real-world contingency response scenarios for training. This expansion of EMPACT's suite of immersive training tools will allow Airmen to perform repeatable, hands-on training in safe, highly immersive virtual environments that replicate remote or austere locations not easily accessible in the real world to further accelerate their competence and contingency response readiness.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Trevor Black, a small package initial communications element technician with the 821st Contingency Response Support Squadron, checks wires on a satellite communication antenna at Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, Sept. 25, 2017. A 70-memb



Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii

Expanding EMPACT’s suite of immersive tools to encompass CRS tasks further promotes the shift within the USAF from traditional teams of Airmen, trained to perform a limited scope of tasks, towards modernization of operational concepts like [Agile Combat Employment \(ACE\)](#) and Multi-Capable Airmen (MCA) leveraging networks of well-established airbases and training Airmen to accomplish multiple expeditionary tasks outside of their specialties.

“HTX Labs is excited to take on this new challenge to aid the 821 CRS with their mission to provide expeditionary airfield operations within an extremely tight time frame. Our main objective with this SBIR award is to allow end-users to pull large-scale, geospatially accurate virtual environments into our EMPACT Platform. When paired with EMPACT’s immersive content authoring tools, this capability will support just-in-time mission training -- allowing for the

delivery of the right training at the right time to the Airmen who need it. We're looking at integrating technologies like Microsoft's Azure Maps to generate geospatial environments from GIS / Satellite terrain imagery and data. These adaptations to EMPACT will support the mission of the 821 CRS relative to training and preparation for expeditionary airfield operations for humanitarian aid or wartime operations. ", remarked Chris Verret, CTO & Co-Founder, HTX Labs.

About HTX Labs

HTX Labs delivers immersive learning software to enterprise and government organizations, employing XR technology and high-fidelity simulations to elevate the level of proficiency and preparedness of the next-generation workforce. HTX's EMPACT® Immersive Training Platform enables organizations to rapidly develop, create, deploy, measure, and sustain realistic immersive learning content anytime, anywhere, and on any device, at scale.

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About the Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) and AFWERX SBIR Program

AFRL and AFWERX have partnered to streamline the Small Business Innovation Research process in an attempt to speed up the experience, broaden the pool of potential applicants and decrease bureaucratic overhead. Beginning in SBIR 18.2, and now in 20.R, the Air Force has begun offering 'Special' SBIR topics that are faster, leaner, and open to a broader range of innovations.

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