ETHNews

Blockchain Messaging App Under Development For The US Military

ITAMCO has announced it is developing a communication platform for the military that utilizes blockchain technology.

By **Dan Cummings**

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On May 25, 2017, Indiana Technology and Manufacturing Companies (ITAMCO), an American technology company, announced that it received a Phase 1 grant from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

ITAMCO will use the funds to create a more efficient, robust, and secure platform using Hyperledger blockchain protocol for Department of Defense communications. According to ITAMCO's announcement, the project will combine blockchain technology with the company's existing Crypto-Chat application - a messaging app that uses 256-bit AES encryption protocols.

The combination of these two technologies will enable ITAMCO to create a hack-resistant message and transaction platform application that separates the creation of a message from how it is sent and received. Joel Neidig, Director of Research and Development at ITAMCO, told *ETHNews* that the messaging app will include features such as: peer-to-peer communication, end-to-end encryption, trust on first use, time to live, and executable distributed code contracts.

The application's decentralized infrastructure will allow personnel from anywhere to transmit secure messages or process transactions that can be traced through numerous channels of a decentralized ledger. The application will be used in different ways, including facilitating communication between units and headquarters, and transmitting information between intelligence officers and the Pentagon.

"We are excited to work with DARPA to develop the latest in military-grade encryption software using blockchain technology, and look forward to offering an enterprise solution for secure messaging to industry," said Neidig.

The Phase 1 grant was administered through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program, a highly competitive, three-phase program that encourages domestic small businesses to engage in federal research and development for commercialization purposes.

During the first phase of the project, which will run for approximately 10 months, ITAMCO will focus on the development of a cyber security

architecture for the messaging application. In addition, during Phase 1, ITAMCO will be working in conjunction with Jarek Nabrzyski, Director of the Center for Research Computing at the University of Notre Dame, and Ian Taylor, Professor of Distributed Computing and Data Science Research at the center. Nabrzyski told *ETHNews* that he was in charge of testing use cases while Taylor was the lead architect.

Phase 2 of the project will be a multi-year project during which the company will develop, test, and evaluate a working prototype. Phase 3 will involve the complete implementation of the platform and commercialization of the app. According to Neidig, they expect deployment to occur in mid-2018.

As blockchain technology has been gaining popularity over the past few years, use of it for defense purposes has increased. Earlier this month, the Department of Homeland Security publicized that it awarded $9.7 million to 13 small businesses in an initiative that would bolster further use cases for innovations like blockchain technology.

DAN CUMMINGS

Dan is a US Army veteran and Los Angeles-based writer passionate about science and technology, current events, human rights, economic impacts, and strategic calculus. Dan is a full time staff writer for ETHNews and holds value in Ether.

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