

DARPA seeks network firing ranges for cyber weaponry

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DARPA (Defence Advanced Research Project Agency), the Pentagon battle-boffins who would rather bet on a long shot than eat their dinners, are looking for the computer-net equivalent of a firing range or exercise training area.

The proposed "cyber network ranges" would be used to test revolutionary new cyber tactics and combat warez in the same way that meatspace firing ranges and test facilities are used to try out missiles and bombs.

According to the requirement:

DARPA may conduct high risk and potentially high payoff research and development of advanced network, and network-enabled capabilities including but not limited to Computer Network Defense and Computer Network Operations...

Ranges are needed to support the realism that hardware-based systems provide. However, emulation-based ranges (I.E. virtual machines) provide the community great flexibility and cost savings particularly when trying to scale to larger network sizes. DARPA testing requires both hardware testing and testing through emulation...

DARPA is interested in the full spectrum of network range capabilities, from network simulations and virtual test ranges that simulate future range architectures and protocols, to physical implementation of networks. Additionally, DARPA is interested in the full spectrum of testing environments - from individual hosts, to single enclaves and local area networks, to world-wide Wide Area Networks (WAN).

The war-nerds, sadly perhaps, aren't looking to buy a whole lot of hardware or virtual machines here. Rather, they're hoping that people will lend them the use of existing networks.

"The requested information is sought to determine the current state of the art and capabilities across the community," they say.

"No funding has been allocated to this effort at this time."

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 [DARPA request in full, rtf](#)

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2007/12/04/darpa_virtual_firing_ranges_wanted