

Operation Warp Speed is Using a CIA-Linked Contractor to Keep Covid-19 Vaccine Contracts Secret

\$6 billion in Covid-19 vaccine contracts awarded by Operation Warp Speed have been doled out by a secretive government contractor with deep ties to the CIA and DHS, escaping regulatory scrutiny and beyond the reach of FOIA requests.



BY **WHITNEY WEBB** OCTOBER 6, 2020 13 MINUTE READ



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Last Tuesday, while most Americans were distracted by the first US presidential debate, *NPR* [quietly reported](#) that the US government’s “Operation Warp Speed,” a public-private partnership launched by the Trump administration to rapidly develop and distribute a Covid-19 vaccine, had taken the unusual step of awarding contracts to vaccine companies, not directly, but through a secretive defense contractor.

Though *NPR* named the defense contractor – South Carolina-based Advanced Technology International (ATI) – they declined to explore the company’s deep ties to the CIA, DHS and the Department of Defense and how ATI is helping to lead those agencies’ efforts to militarize healthcare and create an all-encompassing surveillance Panopticon that not only monitors the world around us, but our physiology, as well.

The “secret” vaccine contracts awarded through ATI as part of Warp Speed total approximately \$6 billion, accounting for the majority of Operation Warp Speed’s \$10 billion budget. Both Paul Mango, HHS’ Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy, and Robert Kadlec, HHS’ Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), personally signed off on the contracts.

Operation Warp Speed, which officially involves the combined efforts of HHS and the military to deliver over 300 million of Covid-19 vaccines to Americans by next January, is a highly secretive program dominated by military personnel, most of whom have no experience in healthcare or vaccine production. The Trump administration has often compared Warp Speed to the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bomb.

Several very unsettling revelations about the true nature and scope of Warp Speed, including the out-sized role of ATI, began to emerge starting last Monday. Yet, most of this new information went largely uncovered by most US news outlets due to the media frenzy surrounding the first presidential debate and the subsequent news that President Trump and several other politicians and White House officials had tested positive for Covid-19.

NPR noted that the decision to use a nongovernment intermediary like ATI to issue the coronavirus vaccine contracts, as opposed to the government itself directly awarding those contracts, allows Operation Warp Speed to “bypass the regulatory oversight and transparency of traditional federal contracting mechanisms.” This means that, among other things, the vaccine contracts awarded under Operation Warp Speed are unlikely to be publicly released in the near future, if ever.

The report from NPR also noted that the Congressional Research Service **had reported just last year** that using such intermediaries to award contracts can result in “significant risks, including potentially diminished oversight and exemption from laws and regulations designed to protect government and taxpayer interests.” Proponents of this unorthodox way of issuing contracts, known as Other Transaction Agreements (OTAs), often argue that utilizing this alternative method for awarding contracts significantly hastens the process. However, the Congressional Research Service also noted that the Department of Defense, which has been increasingly relying on OTAs in recent years, has never tracked the information necessary to determine if OTAs are actually faster than traditional contracting methods. This suggests that claims regarding the alleged “speed advantage” of OTAs are based on assumptions rather than data-based evidence.

Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, Pfizer and Sanofi are among the companies that have received these “secret” vaccine contracts through the OTA authorized by Operation Warp Speed and managed by ATI. Many of these companies, **particularly Johnson & Johnson**, have been involved in several scandals for selling and **marketing products they knew to be unsafe** to the public. This makes the lack of oversight and their exemption from federal regulations (including safety regulations) an issue of concern regarding these companies’ participation in Warp Speed.

This concern is further compounded by the fact that, on September 21st, HHS Secretary Alex Azar **told FOX Business** that all Operation Warp Speed vaccine manufacturers would be exempt from liability for any damages their vaccines may cause and that those who administer those vaccines would also not be liable for damages. “Under the PREP Act, which is a provision in Congress, any treatment or vaccine for purposes of a national emergency pandemic like this actually comes with liability protection. Both the product as well as those who administer it or provide it,” Azar stated during the televised interview. The PREP Act that Azar referenced was originally signed into law in 2005 but was **updated this past April**, a few weeks before Operation Warp Speed was announced, so that vaccine and

therapeutic manufacturers “cannot be sued for money damages in court” over injuries caused by medical countermeasures for Covid-19.



WASHINGTON, DC – MARCH 02: Flanked by U.S. Vice President Mike Pence (L) and Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, U.S. President Donald Trump leads a meeting with the White House Coronavirus Task Force and pharmaceutical executives in Cabinet Room of the White House on March 2, 2020 in Washington, DC. President Trump and his Coronavirus Task Force team met with pharmaceutical companies representatives who are actively working to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. (Photo by Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

Notably, **the architect** of that controversial April update to the PREP Act – HHS ASPR Robert Kadlec – is intimately involved in deciding who is awarded Operation Warp Speed contracts. **STAT News reported** last week, citing senior HHS officials, that Kadlec “personally signs off” on every business agreement made on behalf of HHS for Operation Warp Speed. In addition to **his past** in lobbying for intelligence and defense contractors, Kadlec had previously worked as a lobbyist for **the scandal-ridden biodefense company Emergent Biosolutions**, which is also a major player in Operation Warp Speed as well as the manufacturer of the controversial anthrax vaccine BioThrax.

Despite top HHS officials allegedly overseeing every single one of these business agreements, **NPR was told** by HHS that the Department has “no records” of the \$1.6 billion Operation Warp Speed contract with Novavax, which was awarded through ATI. This is a strange response given that HHS is supposedly the lead agency overseeing Operation Warp Speed, yet they somehow lack a copy of a massive vaccine contract at the heart of the operation. *NPR* also asked the DoD for a copy of the Novavax contract and have yet to receive a response.

At a press conference in mid-September, Lt. Gen. Paul Ostrowski, a key figure in Operation Warp Speed, **told reporters**: “With respect to the contracts, the contracts are between ourselves, the United States government and private entities, and they are releasable to an extent. Obviously everything cannot be released, but they are releasable to an extent and they will be made available at some point in time.” Ostrowski declined to elaborate on when that “point in time” would be.

Also odd is the fact that ATI itself told *NPR* that, at the time they were awarding these “secret” vaccine contracts, it was never explicitly told by the Department of Defense that these contracts were part of Operation Warp Speed, with a former ATI executive describing that key fact as “invisible” to the company.

Spooks and Skunkworks

Advanced Technology International, or (ATI), is a non-profit company that organizes consortia of public, private and academic organizations that perform Research and Development (R&D) on behalf of the U.S. government. ATI mostly manages R&D consortia for the Department of Defense for things like weapons manufacturing, metal casting and forging, ship production and technology aimed at “countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).” They also manage the Border Security Technology Consortium (BSTC) for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which is largely comprised of surveillance technology companies, among other DHS research projects.

ATI only currently manages two consortia with any sort of relationship to healthcare, **the Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium (MTEC)** and the Medical CBRN Defense Consortium (MCDC). The MTEC, operating on behalf of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, aims to “accelerate the development of revolutionary medical solutions,” **which include** gene-editing, nanotechnology, “telehealth solutions,” artificial limbs and brain implants. They are also **currently developing** a wearable device that would diagnose individuals with Covid-19 before symptoms appear.

The other ATI-managed “healthcare” consortia, the MCDC, is **focused on** “advanced development efforts to support the Department of Defense’s (DoD) medical pharmaceutical and diagnostic requirements to counter Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) threat agents.”

They are specifically **involved in** “enabling prototype technologies for therapeutic medical countermeasures targeting viral, bacterial and biological toxin targets of interest to the DoD,” including the development of vaccines. ATI told *NPR* that they were contacted by the DoD sometime between March and April, before Warp Speed was announced in May, and asked to issue requests for proposals related to Covid-19 from MCDC members.

MCDC members include Emergent Biosolutions as well as DoD/CIA contractor Battelle Memorial Institute, with both of those companies having **unsettling ties** to the 2001 anthrax attacks. Also part of the MCDC is CIA/NSA contractor Booz Allen Hamilton and weapons manufacturer General Dynamics. MCDC’s membership has expanded significantly following ATI’s acquisition by Analytic Services Inc. or ANSER, the principal sponsor of the Dark Winter bioterror simulation, **with 18 new members added** just 3 months after the acquisition had concluded.

In addition, there is considerable overlap between the MCDC and the vaccine companies that have been awarded “secret” contracts through ATI as part of Operation Warp Speed, as Sanofi, Novavax, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson are all MCDC members as well as recipients of Warp Speed vaccine contracts. In addition, Emergent Biosolutions, another MCDC member, **was also awarded a major Warp Speed contract** to manufacture Covid-19 vaccines, but that contract was awarded through HHS’ Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), not ATI.

ANSER’s Rise, its Fall and its Saving Grace

In February 2017, ATI **was acquired by** Analytic Services Inc., better known as ANSER. ANSER, not unlike ATI, manages R&D projects for the federal government, historically for DHS as ANSER was the long-time manager of one of the two DHS Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs). However, ANSER also provides services to the DoD, NASA, the State Department and the US intelligence community.

ANSER was originally founded as a spin-off from the RAND Corporation in the late 1950s, but became a much larger part of government operations, particularly in the realm of Homeland Security, after Dr. Ruth David became its President and CEO in 1998. Prior to becoming ANSER’s CEO, **David had been** the Deputy Director for Science and Technology at the CIA, where, among other things, she **laid the groundwork** for what would become In-Q-Tel, the CIA’s venture capital arm responsible for the rise of several Silicon Valley behemoths such as Google and Palantir. David led ANSER until 2015.

After David took charge, ANSER **became an early leader** in promoting the use of biometric and facial recognition software by US law enforcement agencies and was also a key driver of the US government pivot towards “homeland defense” and “homeland security” in the years leading up to the events of September 11, 2001.

As journalist Margie Burns noted in **a 2002 article**, the rise of “homeland defense” as a centerpiece of US government policy, including the push to create a new “homeland security” agency, began with former CIA official Richard Armitage’s alleged coining of the term in 1997 in a National Defense Policy document. In the years that followed, this pivot towards seeing the American homeland as the battlefield of the future was heavily promoted by a web of media outlets owned by **South Korean cult leader and CIA asset** Sun Myong Moon, including *the Washington Times*, *Insight Magazine* and *UPI*, all of which published numerous articles either penned by ANSER analysts or that heavily cited ANSER reports and employees regarding the need for a greatly expanded “homeland security” apparatus.



Lt. Gen. Paul A. Ostrowski, deputy commander at Army Futures Command under commanding general Mike Murray. (Photo by Catherine DeRan/U.S. Army)

In October 1999, at David’s behest, ANSER created the Institute for Homeland Security (ANSER-IHS). Though fully funded and established at that time, but for reasons still unclear, the ANSER-IHS was not formally launched until April 2001. The Institute’s first director was Randall Larsen, who – at the time and still today – is **a close associate** of current HHS ASPR Robert Kadlec. Though ANSER has never explained the reason behind the lengthy delay in officially launching ANSER-IHS, it is possible that the timing was related to the introduction of bill H.R.1158 in March 2001. That bill called for the creation of the National Homeland Security Agency (NHSA), which would later form the foundation of the Department of Homeland Security.

One month after ANSER-IHS was created, *Insight Magazine* published an article in May 2001 entitled “**Preparing for the Next Pearl Harbor.**” which heavily cited ANSER and its Institute for Homeland Security as being among “the nation’s top experts” in warning that a terrorist attack on the U.S. mainland was imminent. It also stated that “the first responders on tomorrow’s battlefield won’t be soldiers, but city ambulance workers and small-town firefighters.”

The following month, in June 2001, ANSER-IHS **co-hosted** the Dark Winter exercise and two top ANSER-IHS officials, Mark DeMier and Randall Larsen, **co-wrote** the exercise alongside Tara O’Toole and Thomas Inglesby of the Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Studies, now the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security. O’Toole, at the time, was on **ANSER-IHS’ board of advisors.**

As previously detailed in **the *Engineering Contagion series***, several of those involved in Dark Winter had foreknowledge of the 2001 anthrax attacks and Dark Winter itself originally established what would

become the initial, yet false narrative for those attacks – that Iraq and Al Qaeda were working together to conduct acts of bioterrorism on US soil. However, the anthrax used in the attacks was quickly determined to have either originated from a US military lab or a US defense contractor.

ANSER's convenient "gamble" that the U.S. government would imminently pivot towards homeland security soon after April 2001 paid off tremendously. Thanks largely to the fear stoked by 9/11 and the 2001 anthrax attacks, the Department of Homeland Security was created and ANSER-IHS quickly became the Department's first "government think tank" or Federally Funded Research and Development Center.

Not long after its formal creation as an agency, DHS established its Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate in 2003 with the mission "to protect the homeland by providing [...] officials with state-of-the-art technology." DHS **later announced** in 2004 that it had "selected [ANSER] to operate the Homeland Security Institute ... [f]ollowing a full and open competition procurement process conducted by [DHS] Science and Technology." This is despite the fact that this very institute had already been funded and established by ANSER in 1999 and then launched in 2001.

From 2009 to 2013, the head of DHS' Science and Technology Directorate was Dark Winter co-author and bioterror alarmist Tara O'Toole, who had long-standing, close ties to ANSER-IHS as previously mentioned. With O'Toole at the helm, DHS **focused on** "more robust public-private sector partnerships" and "increasing the budget for innovative, longer-term technology projects," such as those overseen by ANSER on DHS' behalf. She also made it her mission to model the DHS S&T more closely after DARPA.

During her tenure, **DHS also claimed to be "unaware"** of how the Department's multi-billion research expenditures were being used, suggesting a lack of oversight in the millions of dollars DHS' S&T was funneling to the ANSER-run research center and the other DHS research center, which is run by the **equally shady MITRE Corporation**.

Unexpectedly for ANSER, DHS **declined to renew** ANSER's FFRDC contract in October 2016. They instead awarded that contract to the RAND Corporation, which created a new research and development center with "a different set of focus areas, aligned more closely with current DHS priorities." ANSER's apparent plans for restructuring following the loss of this critical contract included its decision to acquire ATI, which took place just a few months later in February 2017.

The acquisition of ATI gave ANSER access to the key OTA research consortia that ATI manages, ensuring that ANSER's board of former intelligence officials, military officers, and defense industry executives continued to wield considerable influence over the direction of government-funded research projects. Per the **press release**, the acquisition was aimed at combining ANSER's "government problem-solving heritage with ATI's technical expertise," allowing ANSER to continue to execute "thought leadership independent of commercial influences" over the "important defense technology developments" being overseen by ATI. Thus, whatever decisions are being made by ATI with respect to these "secret" Operation Warp Speed vaccine contracts, it is ultimately ANSER signing off on them.

Mess Hall

Given that Operation Warp Speed’s official purpose is to use taxpayer funds to produce, accelerate and distribute a medical treatment (i.e. vaccine) to Americans, there is no reason for such extreme secrecy and also no reason for the excessive role of the military and secretive contractors like ATI and ANSER in the execution of this “public health” effort.

While the officially stated purpose of Warp Speed makes the extreme secrecy involved seem not just unnecessary but absurd, it is worth noting that several recent revelations regarding Warp Speed’s structure, strategy and execution strongly suggest that the reason for the operation’s secrecy is because its scope goes well beyond its publicly stated purpose.

For instance, *Stat News noted last week* that Operation Warp Speed “looks a lot more like a military operation than a science project,” adding that “roughly 60 military officials — including at least four generals — are involved in the leadership of Operation Warp Speed, many of whom have never worked in health care or vaccine development.” That report also pointed out that “just 29 of the roughly 90 leaders on the chart aren’t employed by the Department of Defense.”

Though the military’s initial justification for playing such a major role in Warp Speed was related to its “expertise” in logistics and supply chains, the recent release of the operation’s vaccine distribution strategy makes no direct mention of the military’s role in those aspects of Warp Speed. So noticeable was the disconnect that, soon after the release of the official distribution strategy, the Department of Defense “clarified” the military’s role in the operation by **publishing an interview** on its website with Lt. Gen. Paul Ostrowski, who is leading Warp Speed’s efforts on supplying, producing, and distributing vaccines. Per Ostrowski, the reason the military is playing such an out-sized role in Warp Speed is because of the military’s “program management and contracting expertise.”

Yet, as this article has shown, Warp Speed contracts are being funneled through secretive contractors to avoid scrutiny and are apparently not being made available to HHS, the civilian agency supposedly “co-leading” Warp Speed alongside the military.

Such examples of extreme secrecy and conflicting statements appear to be just scratching the surface of what Operation Warp Speed truly aims to accomplish. An upcoming series of investigative reports produced by this author in collaboration with Ryan Cristián and Derrick Broze of *The Last American Vagabond* will explore this operation and the individuals leading it in-depth, in order to expose Operation Warp Speed as the most secretive, and arguably most dangerous, US military operation in decades. Unlike such well-funded and secretive military operations of years past, this one is aimed directly at the American people.

ATI COVID-19 Operation Warp Speed u.s. military vaccine



Author

Whitney Webb

Whitney Webb has been a professional writer, researcher and journalist since 2016. She has written for several websites and, from 2017 to 2020, was a staff writer and senior investigative reporter for Mint Press News. She currently writes for The Last American Vagabond.

6 comments



Rick Giombetti says:

October 8, 2020 at 3:32 am

Making worthless seasonal illness vaccines, like the flu vaccine, mandatory has been a long time goal for Pharma. The unprecedented fear propaganda campaign this year is about to make this a reality for the current flu vaccine and any vaccine that follows. Not difficult to figure out why Mad Bill Gates left the software business for the “non-profit” philanthropy and vaccine rackets. No taxes paid ever. Plus, immunity from product liability with the vaccines. An outrage against public health and safety that must be done away with. Meanwhile, Trump is grifting big time with his Covid “positive” dx publicity stunt. Touting experimental treatments as “miracles handed down from God”. Meanwhile, the White House apparently has a commemorative coin dedicated to the “defeat of Covid”. Which makes it clear to that it was all a pre-planned publicity stunt. As the entire Covid Coup has been from start to the present.

Reply



Michael Green says:

October 9, 2020 at 5:02 am

Whitney Webb has trouble pinning down just what Operation Warp Speed (OWS) is all about. This is not surprising. I am rather old-fashioned and simple minded about such matters. Former Big Pharma lobbyist and then Eli Lilly President (U.S. Division) Alex Azar, after a \$1,000,000 Big Pharma boost to Trump’s 2016 election, was transformed by Trump’s appointment into the Secretary of Health & Human Services. Azar then misused the PREP Act to provide total immunity from liability for the vaccines for all the criminals involved (including Bill Gates & Moderna). The CIA–military is using Operation Warp Speed to experiment upon the American people secretly and without liability for the damage they will undoubtedly cause. The details of their experiments are known to them and will remain unknown to us except obliquely from sporadic courageous reporting.

Reply



Chris Burton says:

October 9, 2020 at 11:52 am

Maybe someone can ask Whitney to relay to the public that “The Common Rule” for human experimentation forbids federal agencies from performing experiments on the public without informed consent and oversight from Internal Review Boards (IRBs). Bill Clinton’s National Bioethics Advisory Commission made it perfectly clear in their 500 page report on human experimentation that non-federally funded research and classified research are exempt from The Common Rule. So it looks like the DoD is using ATI to bypass The

Common Rule and “test” anything it wants to on the general public, or just plain kill anyone it wants to under the auspices of human experimentation.

Reply



edward donegan says:
October 20, 2020 at 8:54 pm

This is not Republican or Democratic issue, it is clearly AMERICAN GOV'T AGAINST IT'S CITIZENS.

Reply



ourconstitution.info says:
November 27, 2020 at 9:37 am

ourconstitution.info – Home pg NOTE to Trump, Addendum, overview – hell we wish was just a horrid dream.

<https://therealdeal.com/miami/2019/02/27/apotex-pharmaceuticals-sells-planned-us-hq-in-miramar-at-a-loss-following-founders-mysterious-death/> Apotex murder-planned hq Miramar sold

<https://www.statnews.com/2017/06/16/generic-drugs-biosimilars-pharma/>

Delaying generic competitn...worth half Billn \$

<https://nypost.com/2019/12/28/private-investigation-into-murder-of-canadian-billionaire-barry-sherman-called-off/> investigatn stops

<https://capforcanada.com/the-mysterious-death-of-apotex-founder-barry-sherman-manufacturer-of-covid-19-remedy/> HCQ Apotex

<https://www.healthnutnews.com/recap/> MD deaths

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/um-agrees-to-pay-millions-to-settle-medicare-fraud-allegations-raised-by-whistle-blower/ar-BB1aGK1b> UM 22M

Reply



Ronnette Erwin says:
October 17, 2022 at 4:16 pm

Battelle and Metabiota are contractors of the biolabs in Ukraine. Pfizer is predominantly using compounds made in China for the vaccine. Some of these compounds are on the Toxic Substances list, which Rochelle Walensky is the Director of. The FDA clinical trial report uses Chinese Scientists as reviewers of the efficacy of the vaccine. The RAND corporation is tied to McGraw Hill, who is responsible for the printing of textbooks at Harvard, of which Dr. Fauci writes books for their Medical Students and the Homeland Security Handbook. McGraw-Hill also has ties to the Bush family dating back to Prescott. In hindsight, it appears that the things that have been uncovered since the early days of covid point to the corrupt players in the response after the grant money was issued, and did they ever run wild with it. I think we have a pretty good record of how this massive government operation since the times of the Human Genome Project have culminated into a catastrophe. I think it was planned before the initial calling, and I don't think they were ready for the implementation of it as soon as it occurred. Therefore, we have been able to see how rash behavior of the Pharma Companies, Big Tech censorship, and lies of the FDA, CDC, and NIH have told on them by their actions when they have no idea what they're doing except to cash in on grant funds and contracts on a global scale far reaching to the UN and WHO. The GPMB hosted Event 201 and asked Johns Hopkins for a review of how prepared the WHO was for such an event. Hindsight is 20/20, and for the past 2 1/2 years, it has become apparent to me that those responsible for making the virus are the same ones responsible for continuing to do harmful research and continue to funnel money to the appropriate shady characters that they have been doling it out to for many years under the auspices of public health and defense.

Reply

