

Interagency Communications Interoperability System (ICIS) Captures Prestigious State Award

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The League of California Cities has selected the cities of Beverly Hills, Burbank, Culver City, Glendale, Montebello and Pomona as the 2006 Helen Putnam Award winners for a regional radio system that allows seamless communication within much of Los Angeles County. These cities received the Award of Excellence in the category of Effective Advocacy, Intergovernmental Relations and Regional Cooperation for its Interagency Communications Interoperability System (ICIS). The 2006 award winners were honored during the League's annual conference at the San Diego Convention Center.

"I am thrilled that this important regional communications project was recognized by the League of California Cities," exclaims Burbank Vice Mayor Marsha Ramos. "I believe in this project; it is an example of the highest quality and best use of local government resources," adds Ms. Ramos.

In 2003, the cities created the ICIS Joint Powers Authority (JPA), which allows them to collaborate in building, managing and maintaining a communications infrastructure system. Glendale Battalion Chief Don Wright, who also serves as Executive Director of the ICIS JPA, says cities put a lot of teamwork into creating the system. "The award recognizes creative problem solving by the ICIS member cities," says Wright. "A number of challenges were faced in constructing the first regional interoperable radio communication system in the Los Angeles region." Some of these challenges included the establishment of a common radio frequency for all members, plus the willingness to depend on each other's facilities, Wright explained. "By sharing member cities' radio infrastructure, users can roam from system to system without user intervention and without the expense of constructing additional radio towers," relates Wright.

Today, ICIS service is currently provided to over 2,000 radios, with reception covering more than one-third of the Los Angeles region. At system completion in 2006, 7,000 radios will be operational, providing enhanced security to 1.5 million residents.

The Helen Putnam Award for Excellence program recognizes outstanding cities that deliver the highest quality and level of service in the most effective manner possible. The ICIS project, which garnered the award for the six cities, competed with 150 nominations throughout the state this year; only 22 other cities were honored with awards this year.