PRESS RELEASE

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Local Researchers Receive Department of Commerce's Highest Honor for Enhancement of Public Safety Communications

Boulder, Colo. -- A team of nine staff members from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Institute for Telecommunication Sciences (ITS) in Boulder, Colo., received a group Gold Medal for Personal and Professional Excellence from the U.S. Department of Commerce at ceremonies in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, November 8, 2006.

Randy Bloomfield, Eldon Haakinson (retired), and Bruce Ward, all of Boulder; Jeffrey Bratcher of Brighton; DJ Atkinson of Broomfield; Andrew Thiessen of Erie; Val Pietrasiewicz and Ken Tilley of Longmont; and Eric Nelson of Superior received a group Gold Medal for their efforts to enhance public safety communications.

The ITS team received the award for assisting government-wide planning, assessment, and standardization of technologies to

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achieve interoperable communications among "first responders." The team addressed technological advancements to improve radio coverage depended upon by police, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, dispatchers, and other first responders during local and national emergencies. This accomplishment supports the Commerce Department's goal of improving public safety communications to better serve Americans and protect American security.

The Gold Medal award specifically highlights the ITS team's leadership in two areas: developing a national strategy for improvement of public safety communications, and assisting the development of technical standards to enable rapid deployment of a new generation of digital land mobile radio systems. Federal, state, and local public safety agencies, including those in Colorado, are widely implementing these systems today.

ITS (http://www.its.bldrdoc.gov) is the research and engineering arm of NTIA. ITS performs telecommunications research to support NTIA, the Commerce Department, and the Executive Branch on domestic and international telecommunications and information policy issues.