
ITS Awards in FY 2007

Department of Commerce Gold Medal Award

In November 2006, several members of the Telecommunications and Information Technology Planning Division were awarded the Department of Commerce Gold Medal, the highest honor given by the Department, for personal and professional excellence (see photo below).

DJ Atkinson, Randall Bloomfield, Jeffrey Bratcher, Eldon Haakinson (retired), Eric Nelson, Val Pietrasiewicz (retired), Andrew Thiessen, Ken Tilley, and Bruce Ward of ITS, along with Dereck Orr of NIST/OLES, received the award for assisting government-wide planning, assessment, and standardization of technologies to 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.

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.

This work supports the Commerce Department’s goal of improving public safety communications to better serve Americans and protect American security.



Recipients of the Department of Commerce Gold Medal Award share the stage with Department of Commerce leaders. Left to right: Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez, Dereck Orr, Bruce Ward, Ken Tilley, Val Pietrasiewicz, Andrew Thiessen, Eric Nelson, Eldon Haakinson, Jeffrey Bratcher, Randall Bloomfield, DJ Atkinson, and former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information John Kneuer.

Department of Commerce Silver Medal Award

In November 2006, Brent Bedford, John Ewan, and J. Randy Hoffman were awarded the Department of Commerce Silver Medal, the second highest honor given by the Department, in the category of scientific and engineering achievement (see photo below).

The group was recognized for designing and developing a highly advanced mobile radio spectrum measurement system, capable of measuring the latest complex communications and radar signals. Comprised of a vehicle, measurement hardware, and software, the system can measure how much of the radio spectrum is being used. It can also determine

sources of radio interference. It has already aided the Federal Communications Commission, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the National Weather Service, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The Department of Commerce has operated vehicle-mounted radio measurement systems since the 1920s. The first modern system was developed by ITS in the mid-1970s. This year's award-winning design is the fourth generation.

This accomplishment supports the Commerce Department's goal of providing effective management and stewardship of the radio spectrum.



Recipients of the Department of Commerce Silver Medal Award standing in front of the vehicle they designed and developed. Left to right: Brent Bedford, John Ewan, and J. Randy Hoffman (photograph by F.H. Sanders).