



November 24, 2008

State of Arkansas selected to participate in National Governors Association Policy Academy

The National Governors Association Center for Best practices (NGA Center) announced the selection of the State of Arkansas as a participant in the Public Safety Interoperability Communications Policy Academy: Focus on Governance on Thursday, November 20, 2008. Arkansas will be one of six states, including Arizona, Idaho, Massachusetts, New York, and Washington to participate in the upcoming academy. The NGA Center developed the policy academy to help to ensure states' communication capabilities are adequately prepared to respond to an emergency.

"Public-safety communication is vital to our ability to respond to emergencies," Governor Mike Beebe said. "Because of this, we are always looking for ways to improve and enhance the Arkansas Wireless Information Network. By participating in the NGA Center Policy Academy, we will be able to identify the areas where we can best focus our efforts and ensure that our emergency responders can communicate effectively in times of crisis."

The Policy Academy will focus on assisting selected states to improve governance structures that oversee statewide communications interoperability planning and implementation. States will have the opportunity to work closely with and learn from other states, as well as a faculty of government officials, researchers and other experts. Each participating state will identify an interdisciplinary team of representatives from the governor's office and key state and local agencies to be a part of a nine-month process that includes meetings and customized technical assistance. Participating states will also identify a set of specific objectives to improve governance for statewide interoperable communications and submit a final report of activities and outcomes.

AWIN also received national recognition in September with the *2008 Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology in State Government* by the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO). NASCIO named AWIN the award recipient in the category of Information Communications Technology Innovations.

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