



# City of Hermosa Beach

## Information Item

**DATE:** October 1, 2019  
**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**FROM:** Acting Chief Milton McKinnon  
**SUBJECT:** INSB Digital Radio System launch

### **Executive Summary**

On April 26, 2017, the Interoperability Network of the South Bay (INSB) Joint Powers Authority was established. The purpose of the INSB JPA is to implement a modern digital radio communication system that would support radio communications for Local, State, and Federal agencies in the event of an emergency as well as day-to-day use. Members of the INSB include; City of El Segundo, City of Gardena, City of Hawthorne, City of Hermosa Beach, City of Manhattan Beach, City of Redondo Beach, and the City of Torrance. For the last two years, staff from all seven cities have been working collaboratively to build and test the new digital radio system, which will replace the current analog radio system. The digital radio system is now complete and the City of Hermosa Beach, along with other agencies, will be switching to the new system on October 29, 2019.

### **Background**

The INSB radio system project required the physical build of six radio sites in the South Bay. The INSB radio system uses advanced communications technology, which is interoperable, digital, simulcast and trunked. The digital radio system will be used by all Police and Fire Department agencies of the South Bay. The INSB is part of the larger Interagency Communications Interoperability system (ICI), which is based in Glendale, CA and serves an additional 22 agencies in Los Angeles County. When using the INSB radio system, Hermosa Beach will be able to communicate with every police and fire agency in Los Angeles County, which has not been possible until now.

The INSB radio system is capable of advanced encryption standards for improved communications security. To be in line with the best practices of the law enforcement community, the Hermosa Beach Police Department and the other South Bay agencies will utilize encrypted radio communications. Encrypted radio communications ensure the best security when officers are responding to critical incidents and protect the confidential information of victims and witnesses during day-to-day operations.

The INSB determined that Fire Departments would “go live” on the new system prior to any Police Departments. On September 4, 2019, the four South Bay Fire Departments (El Segundo FD, Manhattan Beach FD, Redondo Beach FD, and Torrance FD)

transitioned to the digital radio system and have since reported positive results. During the month of October, all seven Police Departments will transition to the INSB radio system, with Hermosa Beach scheduled to “go live” on October 29, 2019. When the Hermosa Beach Police Department successfully transitions to the INSB radio system, the technology will also be available in the Emergency Operations Center. The INSB radio system is “reverse compatible” so there will be no loss of communications during the transition. This new system will allow INSB users to communicate throughout Los Angeles County. The City and the Police Department will issue a formal press release regarding the new digital radio system on or before October 29, 2019.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Funding for the initial build and setup of the regional INSB radio system was secured via Urban Security Initiative and Homeland Security Grant Program awards totaling \$6,000,000. The City of Hermosa Beach allocated approximately \$761,000 for the purchase of new radio equipment, which includes a mobile radio for each patrol vehicle and a portable radio for each Police Officer. The City has spent approximately \$686,000 for the radio upgrades which have been successfully installed/issued and tested. The remaining funds are kept in reserve for additional communications improvements at City buildings. The annual INSB subscription fee for Hermosa Beach is \$15,194, which is the City’s portion of the ongoing operation and maintenance of the INSB system.

### **Additional:**

Staff is very pleased to see this project come to fruition. The Hermosa Beach Police Department has been part of the INSB from the inception of the project and has played an active role on all three subcommittees. The Hermosa Beach Chief of Police is on the INSB (JPA) Governance Board along with Fire and Police Chiefs from the other South Bay agencies. There are three subcommittees (Operations, Technical, Budget) comprised of staff from various cities. Each subcommittee is staffed with personnel having expertise in the subcommittee subject area. For more than two years, each of these groups has met monthly to work through the myriad of details and complexity involved with a multi-million-dollar project involving multiple cities. INSB has a very informative website: <http://www.insbjpa.org/>, which includes a very informative “ABOUT” page.

Enclosed is a press release that staff developed with the City’s Public Information Officer, Laura Mecoy.

The INSB Governance Board is considering hosting a “Grand Opening” event and inviting Councilmembers from the member cities. Staff will keep Council informed on this event as it develops. This type of project is one of which the City and community can be proud. This communication system will be the backbone for the region in the event of a catastrophic event natural or “man-made,” and is a significant “CIP” type project that may not be visible to the community, however is truly something the community will benefit from every day.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 8, 2019

## **HERMOSA BEACH JOINS SOUTH BAY CITIES IN THE LAUNCH OF A REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO SYSTEM**

*New Expanded Digital Communications will Help Protect the  
Public and First Responders in Seven Cities*

HERMOSA BEACH – The City of Hermosa Beach is joining six South Bay cities in launching a new regional public safety radio system this month that will help protect the public and first responders by making it possible for those cities’ police officers and firefighters to speak to one another and stay in contact with their dispatch centers when they travel beyond their city limits.

“Communications are critical to an effective response in an emergency, and we are proud of the Hermosa Beach Police Department’s leadership in this joint effort to secure federal funding and establish an expanded and improved public safety communications system that will greatly enhance public safety throughout the South Bay,” said Hermosa Beach Mayor Stacey Armato.

Since 2017, the cities of Hermosa Beach, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Torrance have worked together as the Interoperability Network of the South Bay (INSB) to enhance regional public safety communications.

The new regional digital communications system launched in September of this year with firefighters in the cities of El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Torrance “going live” on the system. During October, police officers from all seven member cities will “go live” on the system, with Hermosa Beach Police Department scheduled to start using the new system on October 29. Select non-public safety municipal users will migrate onto the new shared system on a schedule yet to be determined.

The system will improve communications among the cities and with Los Angeles County Fire Department, which provides Hermosa Beach’s fire protection services. The new system will help protect first responders and the public by encrypting radio transmissions to prevent active shooters and other criminals from monitoring and responding to police officers’ and firefighters’ movements and tactics.

Encryption will also protect the private information police collect from crime victims – such as drivers license numbers and medical conditions – from being shared over the airwaves with unscrupulous persons who might misuse that information. The radio transmissions will continue to be available to the public after the event through the filing of a Public Records Act request.

“While we understand that some members of the public like to monitor public safety radio traffic, these unencrypted broadcasts place our first responders in danger because the criminals

we are pursuing can also monitor our transmissions and plan their responses based on those communications,” said Hermosa Beach Acting Chief Milton McKinnon. “The transition to encrypted radio transmissions will help protect police officers, firefighters and the public by ensuring criminals can no longer listen to our communications.”

INSB serves a population of about 560,000 and responds to almost 500,000 service calls each year. INSB’s extended operating area covers about 100 square miles from LAX to Lomita and from the beaches to the Alameda Corridor. There are about 2,800 field-deployable assets in the INSB members combined inventory operating via the shared radio infrastructure.

The INSB digital communications system is comprised of multiple sites located within the South Bay. The multi-site system is configured to simultaneously transmit radio traffic across all sites, which ensures the broadest two-way radio coverage possible.

The Urban Areas Security Initiative and Homeland Security Grant Program provided \$6 million in grants for the new public safety radio system. INSB members invested approximately \$9 million to replace existing handheld and vehicle-mounted radios, which were not eligible for grant funding. Ongoing operation of the system is funded by the INSB member agencies.

#### **About the INSB Joint Powers Authority**

The INSB Joint Powers Authority was established on April 26, 2017, to construct and operate an interoperable two-way radio communications system serving the southwest portion of Los Angeles County. The Joint Powers Authority governs the use of the shared communications infrastructure and provides for its long-term operation. It operates as a State of California Special District subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act (CA Gov. Code 54950 et seq.). The INSB system operates in conjunction with the Interagency Communications Interoperability System (ICI Systems) based in Glendale, CA to jointly provide service to 22 additional municipalities in the greater Los Angeles area. INSB and ICI Systems are working to expand coverage and communications abilities among even more cities through the Los Angeles – Regional Interoperability Communications System (LARICS). For more information, please visit [www.insbjpa.org](http://www.insbjpa.org).

#### **About Hermosa Beach**

Founded in 1907, Hermosa Beach is a thriving community of some 20,000 residents. Located on the southern end of the Santa Monica Bay in Los Angeles County, with beaches ranked among the best in the world, Hermosa Beach has been recognized for its work to highlight Southern California beach culture, foster a vibrant local economy and protect coastal and environmental resources.

*To learn more about Hermosa Beach, please visit the City website:*

[www.hermosabch.org](http://www.hermosabch.org).

*Or keep up with Hermosa Beach news and events through social media channels:*

 @HermosaBchCity  CityofHermosaBeach