



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Long Beach City Auditor's Police & Fire Dispatcher Overtime Audit Wins National Award Audit Identifying \$1.3 Million in Overtime & Potential Unsafe Work Environment Earns Distinguished Knighton Award**

Long Beach, CA – The Association of Local Government Auditor's (ALGA) recently announced that the Long Beach City Auditor's Office won the prestigious 2015 Distinguished Knighton Award for the *Police & Fire Public Safety Dispatcher Overtime Audit*. Judges determined the Office's report was among the best of 2015, noting, "The report identified the potential for significant impacts including budgetary, safety, and operational efficiencies." The award will be presented to City Auditor Laura Doud on May 23, 2016 at ALGA's Annual National Conference in Austin, Texas.

In May 2015, the Office issued the *Police & Fire Public Safety Dispatcher Overtime Audit*. Serving a population of over 470,000, the Long Beach Police and Fire Dispatch Centers play a critical role in ensuring public safety for California's seventh largest city by fielding over one million calls each year. The audit found that the two Dispatch Centers answered emergency calls well within industry standard. However, after reviewing internal controls associated with work scheduling and utilizing a best practice staffing model, the audit found that low staffing levels and past recruitment practices required emergency dispatchers to work extensive overtime. In 2014 overtime hours cost more than \$1.3 million and comprised 22% of all dispatcher work hours, creating a potential unsafe work environment.

The audit recommended that the Police and Fire Departments review more closely their current staffing levels and schedules, the disproportionate distribution of overtime among the dispatcher workforce, as well as their recruitment efforts.

"I am pleased that the City has undertaken our recommendations which have the potential to improve the adequacy and efficiency of the Dispatch Centers' staffing levels and, thereby, reduce the need for overtime," said City Auditor Laura Doud. "One dispatcher personally thanked us for identifying the overtime issues. Having 9-1-1 dispatchers who are not overworked increases public safety by enhancing dispatcher performance, safety and morale."

This is the fourth ALGA Knighton Audit Award City Auditor Laura Doud has received. The Knighton Award is one of the most highly regarded honors, because it recognizes the best performance audit reports issued by its 300 local government audit organization members. City Auditor Laura Doud said, "Our Office is committed to improve government efficiency and effectiveness, and my staff and I appreciate ALGA's recognition of our work on behalf of the citizens of Long Beach."

Detailed judges' comments can be viewed [here](#) and the *Police & Fire Public Safety Dispatcher Overtime Audit* can be viewed [here](#).

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