THE FIRSTNET AUTHORITY UPDATE | NOVEMBER 2, 2020

Featured Activities | FirstNet in Action | FirstNet in the News | Social

FEATURED ENGAGEMENT

Public Safety, Data Drive New Updates to FirstNet Authority Roadmap

By: Brian Hobson, Senior Director, FirstNet Authority Roadmap Development Division

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) Roadmap guides our efforts to enhance FirstNet, the nationwide public safety broadband network. As a strategic touchstone for the FirstNet Authority, **the Roadmap** reflects our commitment to delivering a differentiated network experience for all of public safety.

With more than 1,000 public safety engagements completed over the last year, the FirstNet Authority was pleased to release an update to the Roadmap. The update incorporates feedback from thousands of public safety stakeholders and reflects emerging technology trends identified by academic and industry experts in the fields of communications and technology.

Updating the Roadmap
Following its **release in August 2019**, the FirstNet Authority moved to implement the Roadmap, **launching our first network investments** in two of the Roadmap's priority areas – the Core and Coverage. Totaling more than $200 million, these investments will set FirstNet on the path to 5G and expand the dedicated fleet of deployable assets to ensure FirstNet subscribers have the coverage and capacity they need during emergencies and events.

As we began to act on the blueprint laid out in the Roadmap, we recognized that the network today is not what it was when we first began drafting the Roadmap two years ago. The network continues to see expansive buildout and

adoption across the nation, with more than 14,000 agencies now on the network, totaling 1.7 million connections according to our network contractor, AT&T. Also, as public safety agencies increasingly integrate mobile broadband into their daily operations, new communications needs are emerging.

Data-driven approach
With that in mind, **the FirstNet Authority embarked on an engagement strategy** to update the Roadmap to reflect these changing needs and other developments. The strategy relied on data gathered through targeted engagements with public safety and thorough research about the impact of communications technology on public safety operations.

To develop this update, we also included a more data-driven approach, incorporating polling and quantitative research into our data collection and public safety engagements. This approach provided us with more insight into the capabilities of the network and enabled us to get more specific and action-oriented feedback about key Roadmap areas. Additionally, interviewing academic and industry experts – plus a review of relevant publications – critical perspectives on long-term technology trends applicable to the public safety community.

From our engagement and analysis efforts, we concluded that the Roadmap's foundation – the six technology domains – should remain the same in this update. Public safety reaffirmed the six domains are critical to the network's success, and we believe that the FirstNet Authority can make the most impact on public safety communications by focusing our programs, activities, and investment dollars around them.

Roadmap priorities
While the overarching domains remain unchanged, we updated several aspects of the Roadmap based on the evolution of the network and public safety's needs. These updates include the priorities and key technologies supporting the domains, which have been revised to maximize their potential to improve first responder effectiveness. A few examples of the changes are highlighted below:

- **Coverage** – Public safety continues to place a high priority on indoor and outdoor coverage – **that has not changed**. However, given the deployable investment, the updated Coverage priorities now include an emphasis on unique coverage solutions that address the various environments in which first responders operate.

- **Situational Awareness** – First responders emphasized the importance of locating public safety personnel during an emergency. The updated Roadmap identifies location services specifically for personnel, including vertical location within buildings (z-axis) and mapping, as a priority for public safety. This updated section also acknowledges the need for both a near- and long-term technology evolution perspective. It recognizes that in the coming years, the public safety community will need tools to process large volumes of data and turn that data into useful, **actionable information that can inform decision-making processes.**

- **FirstNet Push-to-Talk** – Following the launch of FirstNet Push-to-Talk in March 2020, the Roadmap continues to prioritize critical features and support in operationalizing the solution, as well as the inclusion of mission critical video and data.

These are just some of the many updates to make the Roadmap more current, specific, and action-oriented in key areas as identified by public safety and our research. The outcome is a strategic planning document that sets the direction for how the FirstNet Authority can evolve broadband technologies to address first responders' critical communications needs. It will help the FirstNet Authority direct resources to the most promising and impactful priorities, both short- and long-term.

Public safety shapes FirstNet's future
Moving forward, the Roadmap will continue to be an important document for incorporating public safety's input into the FirstNet Authority's investment process, as well as aligning our programs and activities to drive advances in public safety's network. Thank you to the stakeholders who have engaged in this Roadmap process, working hand-in-hand with the FirstNet Authority. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with the public safety and technology communities to advance the network and update our strategy for doing so.

Save the date for a webinar hosted by the FirstNet Authority introducing the updated Roadmap on November 18.

FIRSTNET IN ACTION

FirstNet is Interoperability

CEO Edward Parkinson reflects on how the First Authority is keeping public safety's unique communication needs at the forefront of technology as it delivers the **interoperable communications network** that public safety asked for and relies on for its mission. As public safety's communications needs advance, the FirstNet Authority will ensure the network continues to grow and evolve in the future.
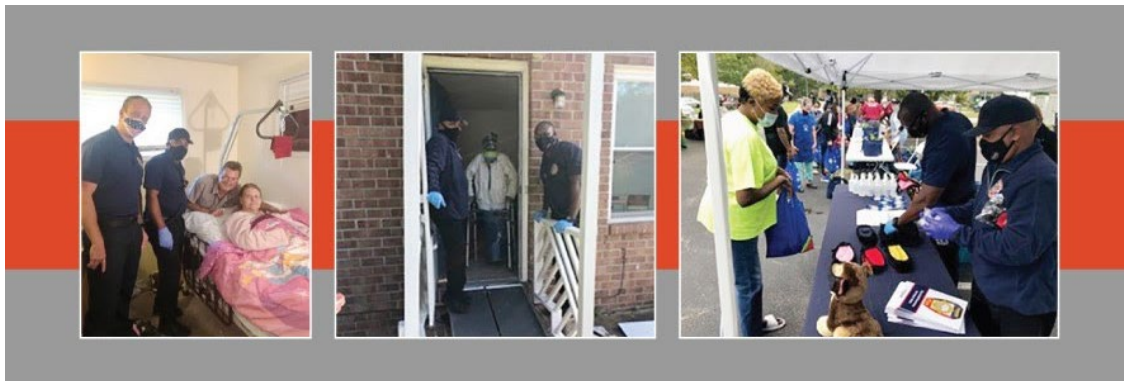

Honoring the Nation's First Responders

America's first responders are at the heart of the FirstNet Authority's mission. Many FirstNet Authority staff are either current or former public safety officials. Collectively, they have deep experience in all public safety disciplines. We celebrate all first responders on *Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day*, and we appreciate their service every day of the year.

FirstNet Network expands Across Northern Minnesota, Kentucky, and Florida to Advance Public Safety Communications

First responders in **Northern Minnesota**, **Kentucky**, and **Florida** are getting a major boost in their wireless communications with the addition of new, purpose-built FirstNet cell sites. This new infrastructure is a part of the FirstNet network expansion that is bringing increased coverage, capacity, and capabilities for public safety.

Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program Relies on FirstNet in Chesapeake, Virginia

In **Chesapeake, Virginia**, the local fire department is exploring ways to manage response for non-emergent care. The Chesapeake Fire Department launched a Mobile Integrated Healthcare program to provide residents with effective access to healthcare. With FirstNet, they are able to access real-time data in the field and coordinate with high-risk patients throughout the community.

FIRSTNET IN THE NEWS

Regional Coverage
FirstNet expands communication for Charles first responders
SoMdNews.com, October 16

Can you hear me now? Yes! Hyndman cell tower up and running
Bedford Gazette, October 24

National Coverage
FirstNet Releases Updated Road Map
MissionCritical Communications, October 27

Senators Press FirstNet, AT&T On Rural Deployment, GAO Report
Telecommunications Report, October 20

RapidSOS, Partners Create Free Public Safety Tech Service
Government Technology, October 16

BE SOCIAL WITH FIRSTNET

FirstNet Authority ✔
@FirstNetGov

NEW BLOG: @BHobsonFN details updates to the FirstNet Authority Roadmap, the guide to the future of #FirstNet. Learn how #firstresponder feedback and data-driven analysis are helping direct resources to the most promising, impactful tech for #publicsafety: firstnet.gov/newsroom/blog/...

Roadmap 2020 Engagement

942 public safety engagements

56 states and territories

22,750 stakeholders reached
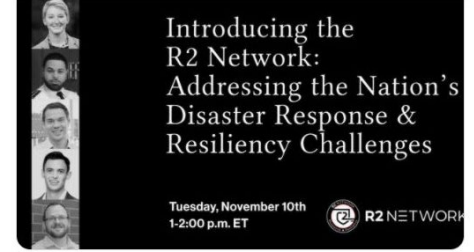

🔁 FirstNet Authority Retweeted

Bill Schrier @billschrier · Oct 28

The R2 Network is funded by @US_EDA and @NIST with support from @FirstNetGov to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in support of#FirstResponders.
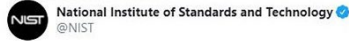
R2 Network @R2Network_ · Oct 27

Register today to join us for our free webinar, Introducing the #R2Network, on November 10th. We'll talk about what the R2 Network will be and how we plan to help bridge the innovation gap within #publicsafety.

r2network.com/webinars/intro/

Introducing the R2 Network: Addressing the Nation's Disaster Response & Resiliency Challenges

Tuesday, November 10th
1-2:00 p.m. ET

R2 NETWORK

🔁 FirstNet Authority Retweeted

National Institute of Standards and Technology ✔
@NIST

Telehealth is on the rise. Now, @NISTcyber's Jennifer Cawthra and colleagues at the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence are developing practical guidance for securing remote patient monitoring systems. Learn more: nist.gov/blogs/taking-m... #BeCyberSmart #HQW2020

FirstNet Authority ✔
@FirstNetGov

#FirstNetAuthority fall newsletters are landing in inboxes soon! Visit FirstNet.gov/newsletters to sign up and get the latest news and updates on how your discipline is using @FirstNet! #WeServeYou

Subscribe to our fall newsletters for the latest about FirstNet.

firstnet.gov/newsletters

The FirstNet Authority Update comes to your inbox with a quick look at events and information you need to stay up to date with the First Responder Network Authority.