

THE FIRSTNET AUTHORITY UPDATE | May 3, 2021



[Featured](#) | [Engagements](#) | [FirstNet in Action](#) | [In the News](#) | [Social](#)



FEATURED ENGAGEMENT

FirstNet Faced Extraordinary Challenges; Passed the Ultimate Stress Test

In the past year, first responders relied on FirstNet for innovative solutions and capabilities to meet the real-world demands of wildfires, hurricanes, and a global pandemic. Last week's AT&T Policy Forum examined how the FirstNet network faced these challenges.

FirstNet Authority **CEO Ed Parkinson** led a fireside chat with **Congressman Bob Latta**, ranking member of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, and one of the principal architects of the legislation that created FirstNet. Congressman Latta explained that, as envisioned by Congress, the successful implementation of FirstNet required the nationwide network to be built out in rural and urban areas and widely used by public safety. Parkinson and Latta discussed how the AT&T-FirstNet Authority public-private partnership helped shape the network to meet these expectations – with **more than 16,000 public safety agencies** using FirstNet's expanded coverage and increased capacity to support disasters, critical incidents, and planned events.

Public Sector FirstNet-AT&T President, **Jason Porter**, moderated a discussion with four public safety professionals on how they harnessed FirstNet to support their day- to-day operations, COVID-19 response, and other emergencies.

City of Vail, Colorado Police Department

Chief Dwight Henninger first became familiar with FirstNet in 2015 when participating in a **FirstNet demonstration at the World Alpine Ski Championships**. During the two-week event, thousands of people descended on the City of Vail causing network congestion for responders on duty. With FirstNet on site, the network provided Band 14 data transmission capability to local police officers, deputies, paramedics, and firefighters. “At the end [of the demo] we couldn't get the [devices] back from them, they liked them so much,” recalled Chief Henninger. “Everybody was very happy that it worked in such difficult weather and terrain situations.”

Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NNTRC), Arizona

At the peak of the pandemic, NNTRC Executive Director **Christopher Becenti** requested a FirstNet deployable asset to support emergency communications for the Navajo Nation's first responders and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel. Tribal first responders also used deployables during the Navajo Nations Fair in Window Rock, Arizona and when First Lady Jill Biden visited the Navajo Nation in April 2021.

Becenti said that the FirstNet Authority's Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) **Tribal Working Group** (TWG) is a “direct line of communication” with the FirstNet Authority. “The input from the TWG helps make sure tribal first responders remain at the forefront and informed the future buildout of FirstNet,” noted Becenti. “It definitely gives abilities to tribal nations to voice their concerns, especially for their locations that the initial buildout may not cover.”

Redmond Fire Department (RFD), Washington

When Fire **Chief** (Ret.) **Tommy Smith** arrived at Redmond Fire Department in 2013, he learned the department used aid agreements with nearby public safety agencies to share resources and lend support. Knowing that interoperable communication is essential across disciplines and jurisdictions, Smith sought out FirstNet for RFD and other interested police, fire, EMS, and public works agencies. “The transition for Redmond was pretty seamless,” recalled Chief Smith. “We actually saved money by going to FirstNet and improved services to communicate with the individual responders and agencies in our area.” As a FirstNet user, RFD has relied on FirstNet's priority and preemption and always-on connection while battling wildland fires across Western Washington.

Department of Emergency and Customer Communications (DECC), City of Alexandria, Virginia

The Emergency Communications Center in Alexandria, Virginia used FirstNet to seamlessly continue operations while working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the height of the pandemic, DECC Director **Renee M. Gordon's** team used **FirstNet's mobile hotspots** to connect with call queues and computer added-dispatch capabilities. With FirstNet's remote solutions, telecommunicators were able to handle high call volumes while working remotely and staying safe. “To maintain the safety of our staff and promote continuity of ops during the pandemic, we developed a solution that allowed 911 call answering to happen remotely,” explained Gordon. “FirstNet's reliability gave us the confidence that we could support [this capability].”

*Learn more about how FirstNet is transforming public safety communications — contact your local FirstNet Authority **Public Safety Advisor**.*



SELECT UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Upcoming Webinars

FirstNet Authority Quarterly Board Meeting

PSAC Spring Business Meeting

Massachusetts FirstNet Webinar- LTE Systems: What, Where, Why?

How FirstNet Can Help Hurricane and Tornado Response

Date

May 5

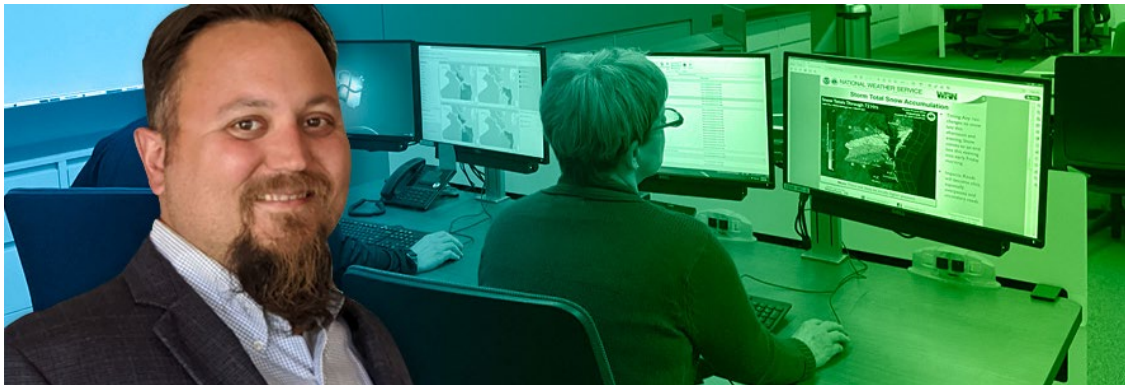
May 11

May 12

June 9



FIRSTNET IN ACTION



Meet the Expert: Emergency Management Expert Bruce Fitzgerald Explores Advances in Technology and FirstNet

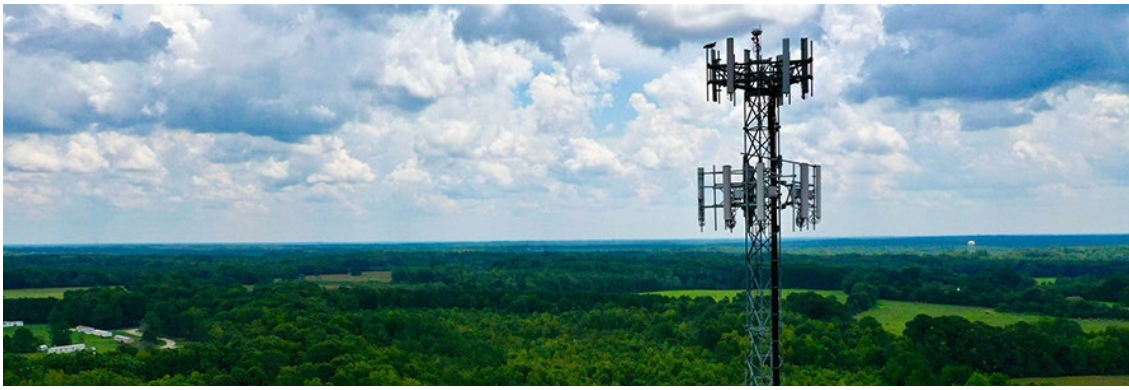
FirstNet Authority Senior Emergency Management Advisor Bruce Fitzgerald spent more than 15 years in public safety and crisis management, responding to major disasters and assisting with recovery and mitigation. At the FirstNet Authority, he works with emergency managers to understand their needs and demonstrate how mobile broadband can support all phases of emergency management.

Get to know Bruce Fitzgerald in our latest Meet the Expert [blog](#) and [video](#).



Using Location-Based Services for Public Safety Operations

Location-based services are making public safety operations safer and more effective. Watch this video to learn how [location-based services](#) can support public safety agencies during in-building incidents, planned events, and active assailant incidents.



FirstNet Network Advances Public Safety Communications Capabilities

First responders across the country 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.

Read more about the benefits for first responders in [New York](#) and [South Dakota](#).



FIRSTNET IN THE NEWS

Regional Coverage

Police learn to enhance response

Wellsboro Gazette, April 23

Three local EMS agencies featured in YouTube promotional campaign

Vail Daily, April 24

AT&T boosts network speeds for Princeton, Zimmerman areas

Star News, April 21

National Coverage

FirstNet adds 5G to first responder network as part of AT&T contract, expanding rural broadband

Federal News Radio, April 21

Working “Like A Dog” Improved With Broadband Connections

Inside Towers, April 27



BE SOCIAL WITH FIRSTNET



In honor of [#InternationalFirefightersDay](#) on May 4, we celebrate these selfless heroes who risk everything to serve their communities. [#ThankYou](#) for your courage and dedication.

Learn how FirstNet is supporting our nation's firefighters: firstnet.gov/fire [#IFFD](#) [#StaySafe](#)



Get to know the emergency management organizations serving on our Public Safety Advisory Committee! These orgs help us understand the communications needs/challenges facing EMs. Learn how we're working together to serve public safety: firstnet.gov/about/psac/ref...



"One of the benefits as a [@FirstNet](#) user is we had the ability to request portable cell sites during emergency situations or during large planned events. We couldn't be happier." - [@Chris_Becenti](#) on [#WhyFirstNet](#) at [#ATTPolicyForum](#)



It's [#NationalSuperheroDay](#)! Today and every day, we celebrate the real superheroes among us — our first responders. Thank you for working tirelessly to protect our communities and keep us safe.

Learn how we're celebrating our [#EverydayHeroes](#): firstnet.gov/newsroom/blog/...



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.



Our mailing address is:

First Responder Network Authority
12201 Sunrise Valley Dr
Reston, VA 20192-0002

[Add us to your address book](#)