
THE FIRSTNET AUTHORITY UPDATE | June 1, 2021



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FEATURED ENGAGEMENT

A conversation with Minnesota's public safety community

On May 26, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) hosted the “Preparedness, Partnership, and Progress: A Conversation with Minnesota and FirstNet” webinar. More than 100 public safety stakeholders from **Minnesota** and nearby states tuned in to hear from the **State of Minnesota Department of Public Safety Emergency Communication Networks Division** about last year’s challenges and the role FirstNet played.

Minnesota state officials shared their experiences using the FirstNet solution to help communities **prepare** for emergencies, form **partnerships**, and make **progress** in identifying and addressing their communication needs.

Minnesota understands the importance of planning and preparedness. Like most public safety officials, State Director **Dana Wahlberg** spent early 2020 consumed by the COVID-19 pandemic response. When civil unrest broke out in Minneapolis that summer, Wahlberg leaned on the partnerships she formed while arranging communications during the pandemic. These relationships were essential to leveraging support from the community to address this new challenge. “Every aspect of planning and preparedness required working with partners and reevaluating in order to be successful. We fostered relationships with locals and engaged with them to create a collaborative environment where they could provide input, direction, and make their own decisions.” FirstNet bolsters these important relationships by helping prepare and provide reliable, interoperable communications.

Minnesota values trusted partnerships. Minnesota Northern Regional Interoperability Coordinator **Marcus Bruning** regularly builds trusted partnerships with state, local, and tribal officials throughout the state’s 87 counties and 11 federally recognized tribes. He says listening to the community is crucial to the advancement of public safety communications across the state. “We never go into the meeting and take over. The support may be regionally organized, but they are locally executed. We let the local experts tell us their perspective on public safety broadband,” explained Bruning. Bruning has participated in over 100 FirstNet Authority stakeholder engagements, where he says listening to the community is vital so broadband access and use can improve on a statewide level.

Minnesota leverages local partnerships to reap real progress. Minnesota’s Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) and Deputy Director **Cathy Clark** is the driving force behind ensuring interoperable communications for all public safety users and at all levels of government. For Clark, “progress is making sure that the right people are at the table, like public safety and first responders, and others in local communities, such as school districts and public works – these people will broaden the knowledge to build success stories to help educate and inform.” With FirstNet built as an interoperable network, all public safety has access to a reliable communications

platform – from traditional first responders to utilities, public works, schools, and hospitals.

FirstNet expands in Minnesota. Since Minnesota joined FirstNet, over \$300 million has been invested into the Minnesota network. These investments (including 14 FirstNet new site builds) have produced 5,250 on-air network enhancements, which translates into increased capacity, Band 14 coverage, and network capabilities. Three new sites launched in the last 30 days.

Today, the FirstNet Authority continues to meet regularly with state and local officials to discuss their public safety broadband needs and network enhancements. FirstNet remains committed to launching innovative and interoperable solutions to address coverage and capacity gaps for first responder use, such as: FirstNet’s 80+ **dedicated deployable network assets**, **FirstNet MegaRange™**, **FirstNet Push-to-Talk**, **Compact Rapid Deployable™**, and **Z-Axis** capabilities.

Thank you to the State of Minnesota’s Department of Public Safety Emergency Communications Networks Division for engaging in this important public safety communications dialogue. These engagements are crucial to the ongoing success of advanced public safety communications across the state.

SELECT UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

<i>Upcoming Webinars</i>	<i>Date</i>
New Jersey Fire Webinar	June 1
Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) Tribal Working Group (TWG)	June 2
FirstNet Virtual Briefing for Public Safety Professionals in the State of North Carolina	June 8
How FirstNet Can Help Hurricane and Tornado Response	June 9
Massachusetts Webinar - What Can FirstNet Do?	June 9
Public Safety Broadband Technology Association Regional Forum (North Carolina and South Carolina)	June 10
Rhode Island Webinar	June 10

For interest in attendance for any of our webinars, please email Outreach@firstnet.gov.

FIRSTNET IN ACTION



FirstNet connects tribal first responders during pandemic

The National Tribal Emergency Management Council (NTEMC) works to help tribes across the country build sustainable emergency management programs. When the pandemic hit, NTEMC began supporting Indian Country by leading logistics to distribute food and personal protective equipment. NTEMC requested FirstNet deployables to support communications in rural areas, allowing the non-profit to carry out operations.

Check out [this blog on NTEMC's work during the pandemic](#) to learn more.



The future of EMS – Improved patient care through telehealth

Paul Patrick, FirstNet Authority Board Member and Division Director for Family Health and Preparedness at the Utah Department of Health, reflects on his career and how FirstNet has advanced capabilities for EMS, including telehealth. He also explains how the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport Model is changing the field of emergency medicine. [Tune in to the latest episode](#) of the Public Safety First podcast to hear how Paul believes telehealth will change the field and how we can support first responders' mental health.



Meet the expert: Law enforcement advisor Harry Markley sees a safer, more secure future with FirstNet

FirstNet Authority Senior Law Enforcement Advisor Harry Markley spent more than 30 years with the Phoenix Police Department, rising through the ranks and serving in nearly every part of the department. At the FirstNet Authority, he works with law enforcement to understand how mobile broadband can fit into their operations and how FirstNet can help keep officers and the public safe.

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



PSAC spring business meeting highlights FirstNet network innovation, expansion

The Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) held its Spring Business Meeting to discuss the committee's efforts in 2021 and its ongoing plans to support FirstNet's growth and expansion. Discussions highlighted accomplishments and business updates in 2021, PSAC Strike Team efforts, and PSAC User Working Group updates.

Read the [PSAC Spring Business Meeting overview blog](#) to learn more about the PSAC's current focus areas.



PSAC Profile: American Public Works Association (APWA)

Public works officials are a critical component of preparedness and response, working alongside law enforcement, fire, and EMS personnel to respond to emergency events. The American Public Works Association (APWA) serves as the leading organization representing municipal and county public agencies responsible for over 70% of the U.S. road systems and much of the nation's other public infrastructure. APWA has been a valued member of the PSAC since its inception, making sure that broad interoperability is built into the FirstNet network.

See how we're working with APWA to help ensure FirstNet supports public works in our latest [PSAC profile blog](#).



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 [South Carolina](#), [Texas](#), [Idaho](#), and Minnesota (in [Lewiston](#) and in the [northeast](#) part of the state).



FIRSTNET IN THE NEWS

Regional Coverage

[Penn State University Police adopts essential first responder tool](#)

Penn State News, May 25

[New towers will bring expanded cell service to the North Shore, Gunflint Trail | WTIP North Shore Community Radio, Cook County, Minnesota](#)

WTIP, May 19

[AT&T's New Cell Towers Bring Benefits to Users and Law Enforcement](#)

KFYR TV, May 20

National Coverage

[Answering the Call: New Alerting Solutions](#)

Firehouse.com, May 17

[Supporting Mobile Public Safety Broadband Using Drone-Borne Networks](#)

National Institute of Standards and Technology, May 13

[How Harris County, Texas, Expanded Vaccinations and Mobile COVID-19 Testing](#)

Government Technology Insider, May 21

[Mobile Modems and Go Kits Supported Harris County First Responders as They Expanded COVID Testing and Vaccines](#)

Future Healthcare Today, May 20



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The Situational Awareness domain in the #FirstNetAuthority Roadmap is focused on bringing #firstresponders advanced tools and technology to help them make informed, in-the-moment decisions. See how we're enhancing Situational Awareness: firstnet.gov/sites/default/...



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Have you visited our new learning hub, R2 Learn? Discover content like "Public Safety First" with @FirstNetGov & learn about the future of #EmergencyCommunications & how #FirstNet is impacting every-day & #EmergencyOperations: portal.r2network.com/course/public-...

Public Safety First - R2 Portal
FirstNet is America's first nationwide wireless broadband network dedicated exclusively to public safety. Public safety fought for this network and [...]
portal.r2network.com



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Hurricane season is right around the corner – learn about the different ways that @FirstNet can support #publicsafety in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from these disasters. Catch the next Emergency Management Webinar on June 9 at 2 p.m. ET: firstnet.gov/newsroom/event...



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As technology advances, handlers are exploring ways technology – such as trackers & live-streaming cameras – can keep dogs & handlers safe & improve situational awareness. Find out how #broadband tech can enhance K9 operations in a @FirstNetGov Podcast: firstnet.gov/newsroom/podca...



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.

