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## THE FIRSTNET AUTHORITY UPDATE | NOVEMBER 15, 2021



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### FEATURED PUBLIC SAFETY ENGAGEMENT

#### Optimizing FirstNet for Drone Use Augments Situational Awareness

First responders leverage drone technology to capture critical data and make more informed decisions during emergency response. During Smart Firefighting's webinar "Enhancing Situational Awareness with FirstNet and Drone Technology," more than 100 public safety stakeholders learned how FirstNet provides responders with the connection and bandwidth to power unmanned aerial systems (UAS), commonly known as drones.

#### Enhancing the common operating picture for first responders

For the First Responder Network Authority's (FirstNet Authority) Chief Network and Technology Officer **Jeff Bratcher**, FirstNet's next evolution will incorporate new broadband tools that support emergency operations. By connecting public safety agencies to mobile broadband technologies like UAS, the network adds an additional layer of near real-time situational awareness to response and recovery efforts. As drone technology becomes more prevalent in training and emergency response, the FirstNet Authority will continue to hear considerations and lessons learned for incorporating public safety broadband into UAS programs.

From FirstNet Authority User Experience Domain Lead **Travis Hull's** perspective, UAS programs are critically important in nearly every type of life-saving mission – including search and rescue operations, crash reconstruction, hazmat scene deployment, assessing storm damage, fire scenes, and traffic control. Hull has relied on connected drones in search and rescue missions in his home state of Washington for live-streamed data, images, and information helping him to cover more area in less time. UAS capabilities save time, resources, and lives, and FirstNet can provide the connection to get information to responders quickly.

#### Drones create a common operating picture in hard-to-reach areas

FirstNet subscriber **Marc Brunelle** serves as the UAS team leader for the York County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) in **Maine**. Operating in the most southern part of

the state, York County EMA's fleet of seven UAS provides drone training and emergency operations to the county's 29 towns. York County relies on drone footage to create a common operating picture for emergency personnel while monitoring fast moving wildfires, identifying encampment sites in wooded areas, and assessing coastal storm damage.

During a massive mill fire in the town of Sanford, York County EMS sent drone footage of the building's roof to the fire incident commander. The incident commander used the information to guide his crew and direct the water stream that eventually extinguished the fire. "The fire burned for 8-12 hours, and we couldn't see the top of the building," recalled Brunelle. "But the drone gave us the right information to paint a common operating picture, and everyone could see exactly what was going on."

Overall, the webinar shed light on how drones are transforming decision-making and information gathering for responders. From finding stranded persons faster and gaining complete crime scene views to planning the safest route for firefighters and gathering vital information toward recovery and rebuilding – UAS technology is showing extraordinary promise for nearly every facet of emergency response.

Thank you to SmartFirefighting.com for hosting this virtual event and to the participants who shared their experience using UAS for public safety operations. As drone technology becomes more prevalent in training and emergency response, the FirstNet Authority will continue to hear considerations and lessons learned for incorporating public safety broadband into UAS programs.



## SELECT UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Western Fire Chiefs	November 15
<b>FirstNet Authority Board and Committee Meeting</b>	November 17
<b>APWA Minnesota Fall Workshop and Conference</b>	November 17-19
Texas EMS Conference	November 21-24

For interest in attendance for any of our webinars, please email [Outreach@firstnet.gov](mailto:Outreach@firstnet.gov).



## FIRSTNET IN ACTION

### **FirstNet Authority Combined Board and Board Committees Meeting**

On November 17, the FirstNet Authority Board will convene an open public meeting of the Board and Board Committees. These meetings are open to the public and press and will be made available via [teleconference](#).



## PSAC Telehealth Strike Team Explores Telehealth Use Cases

During the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth services helped patients and medical providers connect in real-time in a safe setting. In light of this, the FirstNet Authority Public Safety Advisory Committee Telehealth Strike Team re-examined the widespread adoption of telehealth services and identified emerging telehealth case studies that may save lives, streamline medical services, and ensure quality patient care.

Read more about the [use case studies](#) developed by the Strike Team.



## The Impact of FirstNet on Tribal Communities in a Post 9/11 World

First responders' inability to communicate after the 9/11 attacks underscored significant public safety communication shortfalls nationwide – including on tribal lands. The FirstNet Authority is working to bring FirstNet's unique capabilities to tribal communities that are historically prone to communication challenges.

Discover how [coverage is expanding across Indian Country](#).



## New FirstNet Cell Site Launches in Wayne County to Support Public Safety; Congressman Butterfield and First Responder Network Authority Join Unveiling

North Carolina's first responders are getting a major boost in their wireless communications thanks to the new purpose-built FirstNet cell sites launched in Wayne County.

Learn more about the [ribbon-cutting event](#) held in Wayne County.

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## New FirstNet Cell Sites Launch in Tioga County to Support Public Safety, Economic Development

First responders in Tioga County are getting another major boost in their wireless communications thanks to the FirstNet network expansion currently underway by AT&T.

Check out this [press release from Pennsylvania](#) to see how this infrastructure will benefit Tioga County first responders.

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## From Public Safety to Public Works, FirstNet Aids Casper, Wyoming

The Casper Police Department in Wyoming was one of the first agencies to use the FirstNet network in August 2017 when the city's population was expected to nearly double during a solar eclipse. Four years later, FirstNet is providing Casper police officers with coverage across the city, dedicated applications to enhance operations, and connectivity to other city agencies during everyday incidents and major emergencies.

Listen to this episode of the [Public Safety First podcast](#) to hear how responders in Wyoming are benefiting from advanced capabilities on FirstNet.

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## The FirstNet Network Advances Public Safety Communication 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 Jersey](#).

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## FIRSTNET IN THE NEWS

### *National Coverage*

#### **FirstNet announces milestone of more than 2.8M connections**

Homeland Preparedness News, October 29

### *Regional Coverage*

#### **No more 'dead zones?' North Okaloosa County cellphone coverage expected to improve with new towers**

Northwest Florida Daily News, November 4

#### **Tioga County tower expands communication for first responders**

Williamsport Sun-Gazette, November 5

#### **AT&T in partnership with FirstNet announces new cell site for Wayne County Public Safety**

CBS17, November 8

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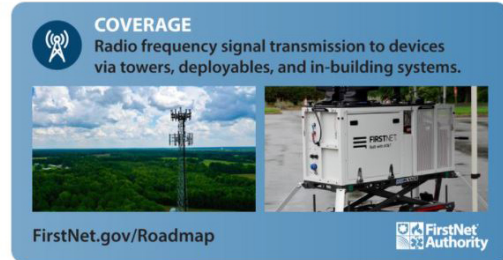
# BE SOCIAL WITH FIRSTNET



What technologies will help firefighters save lives and protect property? Our fire service team wants to hear from you to ensure @FirstNet is delivering the tech firefighters need on the job. Get more details in our upcoming Fire newsletter. Sign up now: [FirstNet.gov/newsletters](https://firstnet.gov/newsletters)



Coverage is fundamental to wireless broadband communications. Take a closer look at the FirstNet Authority Roadmap's Coverage Domain to see how we're working with first responders to expand coverage across rural, urban, suburban, and tribal land: [firstnet.gov/tags/key-techn...](https://firstnet.gov/tags/key-techn...)



Save the Date! The FirstNet Authority Board and Committees will meet Nov 17 at 11 a.m. ET. Come meet our new board members and @FirstNetChair, and find out who won the Chief Harlin R. McEwen Public Safety Broadband Communications Award. Details: [firstnet.gov/newsroom/event...](https://firstnet.gov/newsroom/event...)



Tech is revolutionizing the way firefighters respond to emergencies, from #wildfires to COVID-19. In this article from FirstNet Authority Board Vice Chair @SPFPDFireChief Rich Carrizzo, see how innovative solutions are transforming operations (via @IAFC): [iafc.org/docs/default-s...](https://iafc.org/docs/default-s...)



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.

