
THE FIRSTNET AUTHORITY UPDATE | MARCH 7, 2022



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FEATURED PUBLIC SAFETY ENGAGEMENT

FirstNet Tools in Action: A Live Demonstration of Mission-Ready Solutions

An entire ecosystem of helpful tools and solutions for public safety has grown around FirstNet. Sometimes the best way to understand technology is to see it in action, so the FirstNet Authority's emergency management team hosted a demonstration of how to use uplift, Compact Rapid Deployables, Push-to-Talk, and other capabilities as if they were being used in the aftermath of an earthquake.

The webinar also featured a **Utah** responder sharing their experience using FirstNet's tools and capabilities to support response and recovery after a natural disaster.

The following discusses FirstNet tools and real-world ways public safety agencies use FirstNet capabilities and services that were covered during the demonstration.

FirstNet optimizes communication for Utah responders

In March 2020, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit the greater Salt-Lake City-Provo area damaging roads, utilities, and critical infrastructure. In response, the Utah State Emergency Management Agency, Salt Lake City Emergency Management Agency, and other local agencies activated their emergency operations centers to coordinate communications.

When area outages impacted communications, several emergency operations centers operating on commercial networks lost WiFi connections and the ability to connect to laptops. Utah responders operating over FirstNet maintained their connection due to the network's priority and preemption features. "Individuals reported that communication with FirstNet-to-FirstNet phones was incredibly reliable," said **David Herrmann** from the Salt Lake City Fire Department. "But some reported that when trying to make contact with organizations that had traditional telephony, they experienced problems."

On the morning of the quake, residents looking for information or resources overwhelmed

the Utah Emergency Operations Center (EOC) website causing the site to be inaccessible for approximately two hours.

Looking back, Herrmann became aware of the need for redundant measures to support communication during disaster response. Herrmann compared how FirstNet maintained communication for its users during the earthquake and began evaluating other FirstNet tools and services to support Utah responders in the future. Since the earthquake, the State EOC has been looking into using FirstNet WiFi calling and the network's personal hotspots to give responders redundancy during network outages or delays.

FirstNet demonstrations show network enhancing operations

Adopting reliable, interoperable communications tools can be crucial to enhancing situational awareness and maintaining the safest and most efficient response. The FirstNet Authority conducted live demonstrations on the following:

- Requesting a FirstNet network deployable and the benefits of using a **Compact Rapid Deployable**.
- Making an **Uplift Request** and using the FirstNet Assist App.
- Using location-based services like **Z-Axis tracking solutions**.
- Accessing **FirstNet Push-To-Talk** when responding to disasters
- Navigating the FirstNet Central portal and the **Advanced Network Status Tool**.

The FirstNet demonstrations provided step-by-step tutorials to familiarize users on how to access a combination of different administrative and operational tools. Viewers learned about newly released features and existing capabilities available to maximize FirstNet tools.

Some of the tips included:

- the FirstNet Central Landing page has a new feature giving users the option to request a deployable online – look for the “Request a Deployable” button;
- the FirstNet Assist mobile app allows users to customize unplanned network outage alerts to include outage updates, vicinities impacted, user symptoms, etc.; and
- FirstNet's z-axis location capability gives users communicating with FirstNet-enabled phones real-time information about a responder's unit identification, date and time, latitude and longitude, and height above terrain.

With these mission-ready solutions, FirstNet continues to deliver innovative capabilities into the hands of first responders. To learn more about how FirstNet tools and features can advance emergency communications for your agency or request a live demo, contact your **public safety advisor**.



Recruitment of FirstNet Board Members

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce issued a **Notice of Recruitment** to initiate the annual process to seek interest from individuals who would like to serve on the FirstNet Authority Board. To be considered for the calendar year 2022 appointment, expressions of interest must be electronically transmitted on or before March 14, 2022.



SELECT UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

In-Person Events

Alaska Fire Chiefs Association Leadership Summit, March 7-10

State of Hawaii Enhanced 9-1-1 Joint Committees and Board Meeting, March 10

Southeastern EMS Conference, March 16-18

Illinois Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee, March 17

International Wireless Communications Expo, March 21

Center for Public Safety Excellence Conference, March 22

Wildland Urban Interface Conference, March 22

Webinars and Teleconferences

FEMA Region 9 Outside Continental United States-Focused Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group teleconference, March 15

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



FIRSTNET IN ACTION



FirstNet at 10: A Decade of Dedication to Public Safety

Broadband has become the lifeblood of our economy. It is also essential to our national security and public safety, a fact that first responders recognized many years ago.

Learn more about the creation and growth of the FirstNet Authority over the past decade as we celebrate [FirstNet at 10](#).



Voices Supporting Marshall Fire Responder with Priority Service and On-Demand Coverage

As the Marshall Fire burned through Boulder County, it quickly became the most destructive fire in Colorado state history. The fire damaged critical infrastructure, and commercial networks were congested. However, responders were able to communicate with FirstNet deployable assets on site, including a compact rapid deployable that was able to traverse steep terrain and establish coverage quickly.

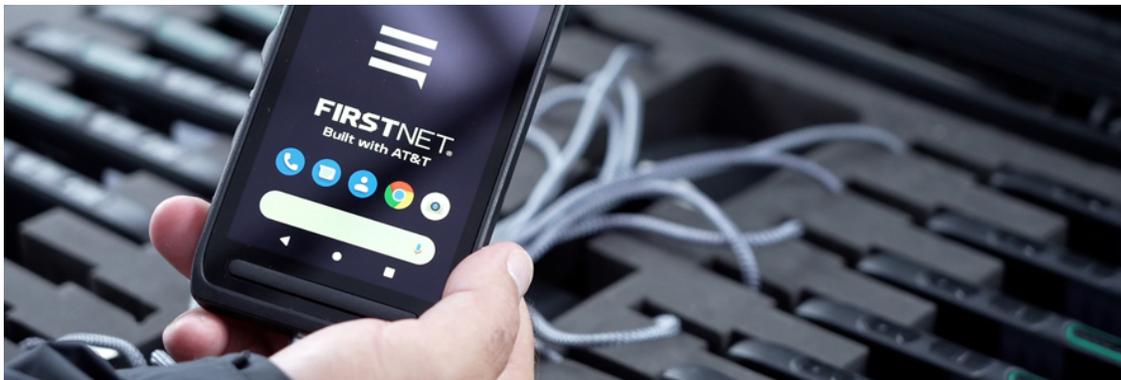
Discover how FirstNet deployable assets played a key role in connecting responders at the [Marshall Fire](#).



Discussing the Future of Public Safety Communications with Board Chair Benjamin

With decades of experience in public safety and public service, Stephen Benjamin understands the importance of reliable communications for first responders. Ten years after the creation of the FirstNet Authority, he reflects on the impacts of FirstNet and shares his vision for the future of the network as Chair of the FirstNet Authority Board.

Listen to this episode of the [Public Safety First podcast](#) to hear Board Chair Benjamin detail his career and how he's seen communications evolve for first responders.



FirstNet Now Covers More First Responders than Any Network in the Country

Public safety agencies and organizations in thousands of communities across the country are staying connected with FirstNet. The public safety community on FirstNet has access to the nation's largest coverage footprint, reaching more than 2.81 million square miles across the country.

Check out the latest [FirstNet momentum](#) to see how responders are benefiting from dedicated broadband.



The FirstNet Authority Statement on Legislation for Program Reauthorization

Read [CEO Ed Parkinson's statement](#) on the introduction of legislation to reauthorize the FirstNet Authority.



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 [Connecticut](#) and [Vermont](#).



FIRSTNET IN THE NEWS

National Coverage

FirstNet buildout on Band 14 spectrum will be completed this year, AT&T says
Urgent Communications, February 18

FirstNet Exceeds 3M First Responder Connections

American Security Today, February 21

FirstNet should be reauthorized before it sunsets, GAO says

GCN, February 24

AT&T Says FirstNet Now Covers More Than 2.81M Square Miles

MissionCritical Communications, February 28

Regional Coverage

Fire responders connect with dedicated 5G network

Redstone Rocket, February 23

Val Demings Champions the First Responder Network Authority

Florida Daily, February 23

Putting FirstNet to the Test for Remote 9-1-1 Operations at #MACoCon

Maryland Association of Counties, February 24

Calexico Police Expand Communication Services

Calexico Chronicle, February 24



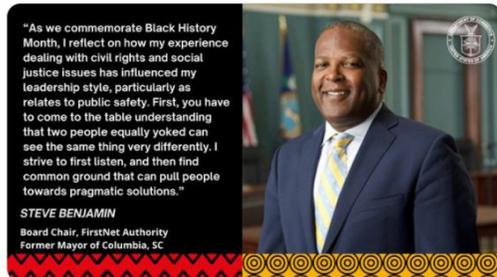
BE SOCIAL WITH FIRSTNET

FirstNet Authority Retweeted



U.S. Commerce Dept. @CommerceGov

Steve Benjamin, Former Mayor, Columbia, South Carolina and @FirstNetGov Board Chair, says #BlackHistoryMonth is a reminder that you've got to lead from the front and work to pull people together with a focus on sacrifice and service.



FirstNet Authority @FirstNetGov

Join us as we explore some of the top #FirstNet10 moments! Our journey officially begins when the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act was signed. Tireless advocacy from public safety led to this legislation, and responders' needs remain at the core of our mission today.





Wildland firefighters told us about their experiences using #FirstNet on the front lines. What did they have to say? Sign up for our next Fire Service newsletter to find out: [FirstNet.gov/newsletters](https://www.firstnet.gov/newsletters)



FirstNet Authority Retweeted



10 years ago, Congress signed a bill that brought @FirstNet, the nationwide public safety broadband network, to life. In the decade since, the network has grown from a concept on paper to a live network supporting nearly 20,000 public safety agencies.



[nvfc.org](https://www.nvfc.org)
FirstNet Celebrates 10th Anniversary
Over the past decade, FirstNet has grown from a concept on paper to a live network supporting nearly 20,000 public safety agencies nationwide.

The Public Safety Advocacy 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.

