



Fall 2016

## Message from Bill Hinkle, FirstNet Senior 9-1-1 Advisor

Dear Colleagues,

As FirstNet's Senior Advisor for 9-1-1, I'm honored to have had the opportunity to travel to more than 50 state conferences and industry events around the country this year to talk with you about the FirstNet Network. I especially would like to thank the many men and women who met with me in focus group settings to share their thoughts about FirstNet. Your input has been invaluable.



Finally, I'd like to thank the many State Planning Committee representatives and State 9-1-1 Administrators who generously offered to co-present with me at many of the state conferences. Your contributions added significantly to the overall understanding of the critical role NG 9-1-1 and FirstNet will play in the future of public safety communications.



We've made great strides in gaining support for FirstNet, but we still have a long way to go. Our outreach activities are designed to help the professionals who manage and staff our 9-1-1 centers to better understand how this cutting-edge broadband communications network will support first responders, making them safer on the job and more effective.

I promise to continue getting the word out, and I'm counting on you to support me in this effort. The FirstNet network is coming soon, and we need to be ready for it.

Bill Hinkle  
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## FirstNet Innovation and Test Lab in Boulder, Colorado

FirstNet marked a major milestone in November with the opening of the [FirstNet Test Lab](#). The 28,000 square foot structure will be the hub for technological innovation, as personnel will be designing and engineering telecommunications properties and devices that will launch public safety communications to a top-notch level.



"The opening of our lab is a great accomplishment for FirstNet in our efforts to deploy public safety's network and we're proud to open it ahead of schedule and under budget," said [FirstNet Chief Executive Officer Mike Poth](#). "This will enable FirstNet to get advanced technology into the hands of our first responders and help them save lives and secure communities."

## Fairfax County 9-1-1 Center Hosts FirstNet

FirstNet recently met with public safety agencies from the Fairfax, Virginia metro area to take questions and offer information about the network. FirstNet representatives Lori Stone (Region 3 Lead) and Tom Shull (Government Affairs) hosted the meeting at the Fairfax County 9-1-1 Center, the tenth largest public safety communications center in the country and one of the earliest adopters of text to 9-1-1 capabilities.



During the meeting, issues were raised like the prevalence of "dead spots" throughout the county, and the technological challenges first responders sometimes face due to Fairfax's infrastructure. Over the past few years, FirstNet has collected [data from all 56 states and territories](#) to learn and study exactly that type of information. The data will be shared with FirstNet's future partner, who will then assist FirstNet in creating individual coverage plans for every area. The FirstNet team also answered questions from Fairfax County's Police Chief, its Chief Technology Officer, its 9-1-1 Director, as well as representatives from the sheriff's department and VA Senator Mark Warner's office. At the end of the meeting, Fire Chief Richard Bowers said it was the best FirstNet meeting he'd ever been to, adding that his concerns were well addressed.

## NG 9-1-1 and FirstNet

[Next Generation 9-1-1 \(NG 9-1-1\)](#) and [FirstNet](#) are separate systems that will work together to provide critical information to first responders. The convergence of the NG 9-1-1 network and FirstNet at the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) will dramatically enhance public safety communications from the time a call originates on the NG 9-1-1 network to the PSAP, through the FirstNet network to the first responders. As FirstNet develops a secure broadband communications network it will work with the PSAP to help ensure that it interoperates with NG 9-1-1 networks. Visit [FirstNet.gov](#) to watch a video on the potential benefits of a future FirstNet / NG 9-1-1 environment for public safety.

*"I'm excited about the potential of NG9-1-1 and FirstNet to increase caller location accuracy, especially since we get a lot of calls from vacationers in rural areas."*

**Cheryl Konarski**

*Dispatch Supervisor / Training Officer,  
Dade County MO Emergency Services*

## Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

FirstNet's [PSAC](#) is comprised of 43 representatives from public safety and state, territory, local and tribal organizations. The committee advises FirstNet on a variety of topics, including public safety grade, priority and preemption, and user equipment. Visit [FirstNet.gov](#) for a full list of committee members and their respective associations.

## What You Can Do

FirstNet is for you, America's first responders. It's important that you let your local and state officials know



that you want and need FirstNet in your area. Tell them how much it would help public safety to have interoperable equipment and dedicated broadband that will allow you to share large amounts of data anytime, anywhere and without interruption.

[Contact your State Single Point of Contact \(SPOC\) today.](#)

Spread the word about FirstNet in the public safety community, either by word-of-mouth or social media:

- Write to your FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee ([PSAC](#)) professional associations such as [National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators](#) and/or [National Emergency Management Association](#), and ask them to pass a resolution in support of FirstNet.
- Follow FirstNet at the social media sites below.
- Write a guest blog for FirstNet by contacting us at [socialmedia@firstnet.gov](mailto:socialmedia@firstnet.gov).

*"When FirstNet is built out it will provide the bandwidth by which video, photographs, data, etc. will be able to be communicated out to those men and women who have responded to the scene."*

**Steve Souder**

*Director of Fairfax County, Virginia 9-1-1 Center*

## About FirstNet

Congress created the First Responder Network Authority in 2012 at the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission. FirstNet is an independent authority that is governed by a 15-member board comprised of fire, police, EMS, industry representatives, and three federal employees.

## Ways to Connect

FirstNet's website ([FirstNet.gov](#)) is an excellent resource for information. The FirstNet Communications team is continually adding new material to YouTube that showcases FirstNet interactions with public safety across the country, and highlights future capabilities. FirstNet blogs provide insight into the activities of the FirstNet team and updates for public safety on progress toward the network. For breaking news alerts, stay connected with your SPOC and engaged with FirstNet on social media.

Reach out to Bill Hinkle:  
[William.Hinkle@firstnet.gov](mailto:William.Hinkle@firstnet.gov)



## Social Media



<https://www.youtube.com/user/FirstNetGov>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/first-responder-network-authority-firstnet->



<https://twitter.com/FirstNetGov>



<https://firstnetgov.tumblr.com/>



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