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THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TAKE: SUMMER 2019



## The Emergency Management Take from Lesia Dickson

Smart planning for exercises and events

I've been traveling the country to talk to Emergency Management (EM) teams about FirstNet. More public safety agencies are using FirstNet in their training and exercise programs to practice operationalizing public safety broadband. I also see EM teams using new tools from the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) to strategize for planned events. I want to share with you a couple of recent success stories.

### FirstNet aids disaster scenario response at training center

Public safety leaders assembled a real-world earthquake scenario for first responders to train and practice at Texas A&M University Engineering Extension Service's (TEEX) Disaster City®. [The exercise demonstrated the benefits of the FirstNet public safety broadband network](#), enabling first responders to connect their devices without having to compete with the public for a signal.

"A lot of first responder agencies are not accustomed to having a dedicated smart device in a work context," explained Jared VandenHeuvel, program coordinator for the Texas Department of Public Safety, who participated in the demonstration. "This was a great opportunity for industry and academia to put some prototypes in their hands and get that live feedback as close as you can get to a simulated event."

### Rural responders use FirstNet in search and rescue exercises

Public safety agencies from Virginia and Maryland conducted search and rescue exercises in Gore, VA — a remote region in the Shenandoah Valley — and incorporated a [FirstNet deployable to expand their communication capabilities](#). The deployable linked to FirstNet via satellite and strengthened communications between the incident scene and the command post, and importantly, between the incident scene and the agencies' headquarters hundreds of miles away.

"There are places, just like right here, where you don't have the best coverage," said Jim Junkins, Director of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center, who participated in the exercise. "When FirstNet can come out and bring equipment and connect to a satellite and expand the cellular network — the data, the access — those are big things."

### Public safety injects catalog

For training, exercises, and planned events, the FirstNet Authority offers a public safety broadband injects catalog. The injects catalog uses a series of realistic and accurate exercise questions and injects to strengthen proficiencies with FirstNet, maximize the network's capabilities on-site, and plan successful exercises and events. Our FirstNet Authority team can consult on your exercise or event to offer on-the-ground expertise.

Are you interested in the injects catalog? I'd love to hear from you. Email me, or better yet, join me at one of these upcoming events, where I'll be talking FirstNet with the EM community:

- [American Public Works Association \(APWA\) 2019 Public Works Expo \(PWX\)](#) in Seattle, WA, on September 11, 2019
- [National Emergency Management Association \(NEMA\) 2019 Annual Forum](#) in Coeur d'Alene, ID, on October 29, 2019
- [International Association of Emergency Managers \(IAEM\) 2019 Annual Conference & EMEX](#) in Savannah, GA, on November 20, 2019

[Visit the Emergency Management discipline page](#)

## Inside FirstNet

- 1 [FirstNet takes to the skies](#) with three new flying COWs (Cells on Wings), part of a nationwide fleet of FirstNet-dedicated deployable assets available at no extra cost to subscribers.
- 2 Broadband access is expanding with new FirstNet cell sites in rural areas—like [Preston County, West Virginia](#) and the [Red Cliff Reservation](#) in Wisconsin—to increase nationwide coverage and capacity.
- 3 [We've heard you](#). Stay tuned for the [FirstNet Authority Roadmap](#), a plan to advance FirstNet based on your feedback.
- 4 San José leads the nation in [deploying FirstNet to all of the city's public safety personnel and emergency response staff](#)—"from tip to tail of the organization."
- 5 Why FirstNet? FirstNet connects America's first responders "[ocean to ocean, Canada to Mexico, and everything in between](#)," making it easier for public safety across the country to communicate with each other as they serve and protect.

## Tech, Innovations and Hot Topics in Emergency Management

*Read what we've been hearing from public safety in the field about trends and drivers for Emergency Management and emergency communications.\**

We've been hearing buzz about resource management and supply chains. Helping communities recover from disaster is dependent on the resiliency of the private sector supply chain. FEMA's PrepTalk series zeroed in on the [public and private sectors working together to restore supply chains after disasters](#). "Responses should incorporate and align with the private sector, which has far more capacity to act," said Dr. Jarrod Goentzel, founder and director of the Humanitarian Supply Chain Lab in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Center for Transportation and Logistics. Watch Dr. Goentzel's PrepTalk about the [role of emergency managers in supporting private sector supply chain restoration](#).

## Connecting and Testing in Rural Communities



*First responders from the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Maryland integrated FirstNet into search and rescue exercises held in Gore, VA — a remote region in the Shenandoah Valley.*

Lesia Dickson is an Area Director and the First Responder Network Authority Emergency Management Subject Matter Expert. Learn [more about Lesia](#) or [email her](#) with your questions.

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*Top photo: Ground is broken on a new AT&T cell site on Red Cliff Reservation.*

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