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THE FIRE SERVICES TAKE: SUMMER 2019



The Fire Services Take from Mike

Worrell

The future of push-to-talk

My colleagues and I at the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) are talking to fire agencies across the country about how FirstNet can help put the most advanced communications capabilities into the hands of first responders, so you can do your job more effectively, efficiently, and safely.



Push-to-Talk

Today [some agencies are leveraging FirstNet to use LTE devices with commercial Push-to-Talk capabilities](#) to augment land mobile radios (LMR) and expand coverage areas. At the same time, Mission Critical Push-to-Talk (MCPTT) technical standards continue to evolve, and the vendor community is building technologies based on these standards—all with the goal of improving PTT to meet public safety's needs.

The future of Mission Critical Push-to-Talk

LMR and LTE technologies complement one another, and fire departments can use both to their best advantage. I continue to hear from my colleagues in the fire service that, in order for PTT over LTE to meet the mission within a hazard zone, the three key elements to consider are:

1. Firefighters rely on building codes to operate in extreme environments.
2. Firefighters require on building codes to require in-building systems to repeat radio signals on the interior.
3. Fire fighters need direct mode to provide device-to-device communications capability in the event of a building system failure or lack of coverage.

This takes time, and ultimately individual public safety agencies must decide when the technology meets the needs in their jurisdictions. For now, PTT over LTE can provide many fire departments with communications for administrative or support functions by integrating LMR-LTE solutions or LTE-PTT. Common uses might include executive staff, fire inspectors, and other support functions that do not engage in hot-zone activities. Once MCPTT is available, the fire service might identify additional uses that are also suitable.

To ensure MCPTT meets the needs of the fire service, the FirstNet Authority is actively participating in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards process and the International Code Council/International Fire Code revision cycles. We are also advocating for standards for direct mode for LTE and working with our network contractor, AT&T, to drive innovation for devices.

The FirstNet Authority Roadmap

MCPTT-standards-based technology is also included in the [FirstNet Authority's Roadmap](#), which is our plan for future investments and enhancements for FirstNet. In the next 23 years, a potential \$18 billion will be invested into the network to advance public safety communications capabilities. The Roadmap has been built from public safety's feedback captured in more than 600 engagements involving over 15,000 public safety representatives in 2019. For example, we held a [Public Safety Roadmap Summit](#) in June in Phoenix, AZ, attended by over 100 public safety professionals. At this meeting, we delved into the purpose of the Roadmap and discussed the six technology focus areas or "domains" prioritized in the Roadmap—FirstNet Core, Coverage and Capacity, Situational Awareness, Voice Communications, Secure Information Exchange, and User Experience.

Share your experience

How do you envision using FirstNet? 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 fire services community:

- [International Association of Fire Chiefs \(IAFC\) 2019 Fire-Rescue International \(FRI\)](#) in Atlanta, GA, for a panel on LMR & LTE System Integration for the Fire Service: Interoperability and More (FN-107) (Thursday, August 8 at 1:30- 3:00 PM in the Georgia World Congress Center, B315)
- [International Association of Fire Fighters \(IAFF\) Redmond Symposium/Barbera EMS Conference](#) in Nashville, TN, on August 19-22

[Visit the Fire Services 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 Public safety agencies are using FirstNet at [trainings](#) and [exercises](#) to integrate public safety broadband into their operations.

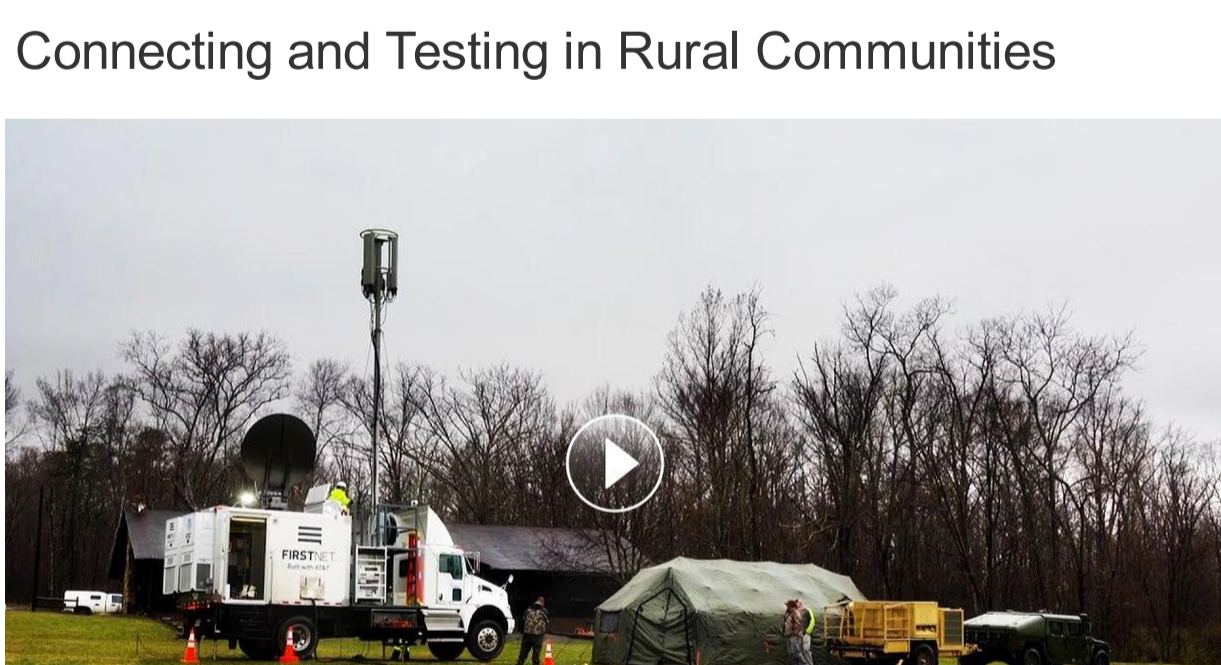
Tech, Innovations and Hot Topics in Fire

Services

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

A new [federal law](#) will require the U.S. Departments of Interior and Agriculture to coordinate with state wildland firefighting agencies and others on the development of real-time mapping technology to show the location of firefighters and resources available to combat large wildland fires. The legislation aims to assist firefighter by providing for real time information on the [size and scope of wildfires gathered from drones, as well as the use of location systems, like GPS](#), to display the specific location of firefighters and other available resources. Congress recently heard about [technologies that may assist in the real-time mapping effort](#), including software to show a real time locations of wildfires and firefighters, drones that map wildfires in real-time and a system that can shut off electricity to a broken power line before it hits the ground.

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.

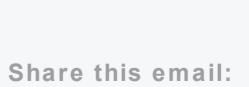
Mike Worrell is an Area Director and the First Responder Network Authority Fire Services Subject Matter Expert. Learn [more about Mike](#) or [email him](#) with your questions.

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Top photo: An Altoona fire truck and an AT&T SatColt sit outside a recent FirstNet Authority engagement in Iowa.

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