

### FirstNet gives responders access to commercial technology

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January 28, 2015

Imagine if a police officer could send the location of a fleeing suspect to other officers while perusing the suspect on foot. Or if medical personnel caring for a patient inside an ambulance could video conference with doctors in the emergency room en route to the hospital?

Thanks to a new government network, these tasks are now within reach, according to a [blog](#) by TJ Kennedy, FirstNet's acting executive director.

Established through a 2012 law, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), within the Department of Commerce, will set up a nationwide communications network that will allow first responders and their teams to operate more seamlessly. The network will not only be established within the continental United States but the five U.S. territories along with Hawaii and Alaska.

The FirstNet network will use technology similar to commercial cell phone networks' 4G broadband service to help connect on-scene data, dashboard cameras, body cameras and other necessary media-linked devices for the best interoperability. Access to 4G will allow for mobile web access, video conferencing and HD video specifically designed for public safety officers and first responders.

With FirstNet, emergency personnel will use a 700 MHz spectrum that will improve interoperability, allowing for instantaneous data and voice communications upon arriving on the scene of an emergency. FirstNet will also feature priority usage during large emergencies, which will permit multiple agencies and departments to communicate and share data when responding to a single large event. The mobile access will be able to use GPS location to pinpoint the operator's exact position, which can be useful when trying to mobilize personnel to a crime or emergency.

In Adams County, Colo., grant funds totaling \$12.2 million will pay for a 1,200 square mile [network](#)

providing services to 14 different public agencies. In addition, the county is expected to receive 1,000 4G LTE wireless SIM cards that will let first responders more quickly access records and databases in the field.

FirstNet will save agencies time and money while contributing to more efficient responses to emergencies. In line with efficiency, officers can even complete their time consuming paperwork remotely by wirelessly accessing records systems through broadband internet access. FirstNet promises to greatly change the scope of first responding by bringing government agencies into the next generation.

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