



Response to storms yields valuable lessons as we work to build out a dedicated first responder network

This 2017 storm season has been unprecedented, yielding the highest number of consecutive hurricanes in the satellite era, according to the National Hurricane Center.

As multiple storms swirled in the Atlantic in August and September, almost the entire country went into emergency response mode. Agencies from across the U.S. raced to the rescue. And our disaster recovery teams sprang into action. They deployed to potentially affected areas before the storms made landfall and immediately after – on the Gulf Coast, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Florida.

- Our teams kept in close contact with state Department of Public Safety needs and deployed Satellite Cells On Light Trucks (COLTs) along with teams as they moved into affected areas.
- We identified problem areas and deployed assets ahead of formal request channels
- We forward deployed Sat COLTs to a large staging area should they be needed to bolster communications there. And we deployed a charging trailer so all responders could keep their devices charged.
- In addition, we put up a map of all active COLTs placed live on Google Maps for situational awareness.

For FirstNet, the storms yielded valuable lessons, as we work to build out a dedicated first responder network for you.

When AT&T won the contract in March to deliver a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network, Chris Sambar, AT&T Senior Vice President – FirstNet Program, built a team of managers who have more than a century of public safety experience between them.

“The team anticipated what first responders needed because they've walked in their shoes,” said Sambar. “They worked with Network Disaster Recovery and External Affairs with an urgency driven by passion.”

In Southeast Texas, we deployed a fleet of 25 drones to areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey. We inspected cell towers to determine the hurricane impact on our network. Using drones let us access areas that couldn't be reached by cars or trucks because of flooding

Connect with emergency operations centers

Brian Maholic, who works on the FirstNet Program at AT&T, spent nearly a decade embedded with Texas first responders when he was a radio engineer. "As Harvey approached, they invited me to work with them at the emergency operations center," he said. "We made sure their people could communicate before they headed into harm's way."

Emergency Operation Centers are command central during major emergencies. Relationships established before disaster strikes, plus a seat at the centers as a crisis unfolds, help us provide fast solutions.

Providing priority access for public safety

During Harvey, some first responders faced network congestion as millions tried to contact loved ones. Brian told them we could manually provide them with priority network access during the storm. So, we turned up the service for more than 20,000 Texas and Florida first responder subscribers.

Once these first responders subscribe to a FirstNet plan, they won't have to compete with commercial traffic for a connection. Their priority network access will be automatic and constant.

Using the team's expertise to decide where to position resources

When Irma hit the Virgin Islands, a task force evacuating a St. Thomas hospital had no phone service. Vince Sottosanti, who has 12 years supporting public safety and now works on the FirstNet Program at AT&T, worked with the national disaster response and network teams to deliver a Cell on Wheels (COW) by barge to help with patient evacuations.

Passion for public service translates into a lifetime devotion to public safety for Fred Scalera

Fred Scalera was just 14 when he became a junior firefighter.

“My father was a firefighter. My uncle was a captain,” he said. “I’ve just always loved the fire service.”



Over the next 43 years, Scalera served in every capacity with the Nutley Fire Department of New Jersey obtaining the rank of Chief, as well as myriad positions in the community and the state.

His resume in public service is extensive and includes positions in the Essex County Sheriff’s Department, Essex County prosecutor’s office, the Nutley Office of Emergency Management and the New Jersey State Legislature. As an assemblyman for New Jersey’s 36th Legislative District, Scalera sponsored over 100 bills that were signed into law – many of them dealing with public safety.

Today, he continues that devotion to public service working on the FirstNet Program at AT&T. He’s helping to build a network for first responders across the country – and working to develop tools to make their jobs easier.

“I never imagined doing anything else,” Scalera said.

In the late 1990s, while serving as the deputy coordinator with the Nutley Office of Emergency Management and as Fire Captain with the Nutley Fire Department, Scalera conceived a mass decontamination program. He had helped establish Hazardous Materials standards in New Jersey. And based on his experience dealing with hazardous materials issues in the area, he felt that, as the county hazardous materials team, they needed a mass decontamination program. So, he began to stock the necessary supplies, built a program for a large-scale decontamination and trained his personnel.

“I just felt like we needed to be ready,” he said. “And then the 9/11 attacks occurred... A lot of my guys were ready to go. But I told them, we wait for the call. We don’t self-deploy.”

Hours later, Scalera got the call came from University Hospital EMS in Hoboken, N.J., where “people were coming in on boats, covered in dust and things all over them.”

Scalera and his team jumped into action. “We operated for more than 20 hours and decontaminated about 10,000 people who were coming into New Jersey...Watching a five-year retrospective [of the 9/11 attacks], “I got choked up thinking, ‘That’s what I created.’”

Scalera received an honorary doctorate degree in humanities from Essex County College in 2002 for his work on 9/11. Among his other accomplishments, Scalera:

- Created the Essex County Mass Decontamination Task Force, which became the model for the statewide decontamination task force

- Coordinated the New Jersey decontamination response to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts during operation Louisiana Emergency Assistance Deployment
- Drafted legislation that established New Jersey standards for hazardous materials teams
- Drafted legislation creating the New Jersey Emergency Deployment Act to resolve issues raised during the 9/11 response
- And served as the Bureau Chief of Interoperable Communications, responsible for New Jersey as one of the FirstNet Early Builder projects.

Scalera said he took on the job with the FirstNet Program at AT&T, because he “wanted to make FirstNet a success.”

Why? “Because if we can make that a success, then public safety is a success. And that’s the mission.”

FirstNet offers 72 deployables dedicated exclusively to public safety use



On-demand deployable assets are a key benefit of FirstNet. And they allow FirstNet customers to expand, enhance, or rebuild coverage during an operational response. FirstNet is the only wireless broadband network with a deployables fleet dedicated exclusively to public safety use.

These 72 dedicated FirstNet deployables are ready for action whenever you need them to support the unique needs of first responders, at no additional cost.

Our experts, in consultation with states and territories, will help determine where to station them for the greatest good. During emergency situations or planned events requiring replacement coverage and capacity, FirstNet and AT&T will evaluate the request and provide the deployable services.

In addition, mobile satellite services and other deployable systems can enhance coverage throughout the 56 states and territories. FirstNet will facilitate the staging and management of the dedicated deployable units through a “lending library” approach. And public safety agencies may consider procuring and employing their own deployables as their mission dictates.

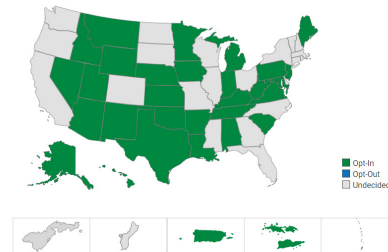
The FirstNet dedicated Satellite Cells on Lights Trucks are 24,500 lbs, do not require a commercial driver’s license and can be operational within an hour after parking the unit. They include:

- Climate controlled shelter/protection for equipment & personnel
- Triple redundant power for reliability (shore power, generator, batteries)
- Self-reliant on-board generator
- Redundant HVAC
- Self-leveling system for optimal set up

- 1.8 m Satellite dish
- 60 Foot Cellular Pneumatic mast that holds up 450 lbs.
- Pre-mounted Cell antennas and Pneumatic mast cable reel for quick set-up and tear down
- Multiple LTE bands: LTE Band-14
- Remote environment alarm monitoring (including IP camera and weather station)
- Fully integrated OSS provisioning and management

FirstNet Momentum Continues: FirstNet Reaches 48% Opt Ins!

South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Utah became Nos. 29, 30 and 31 of the 56 states and territories to opt in to FirstNet. (50 states, 5 territories and District of Columbia).



The states announced their decisions earlier this month to accept the FirstNet and AT&T plan to deliver a wireless broadband network to their state's public safety community.

[View Interactive Map of State Opt-Ins](#)

For more information on FirstNet, please visit FirstNet.com.

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