

# Newsletter

March 2020

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Volume 4, Edition 3



## Public Safety's Network supports COVID-19 emergency response from coast to coast

For over a month, police, fire, EMS, public health, emergency management and military personnel have been working around the clock to assess and mitigate the [COVID-19](#) spread nationwide. That means having the reliable connectivity they need to effectively coordinate and communicate their emergency response.

As public safety's partner – not simply a vendor or commercial network provider – [FirstNet](#) is proud to be by their side. We're helping to address public safety's needs. And we want to deliver for the men and women our

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## Enhancing communication for Oglala Sioux Tribe

The 52 officers in the Oglala Sioux Tribe's Department of Public Safety cover 3,500 square miles of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. In this expanse, an officer's back-up can be almost an hour away at times. Hear how FirstNet has helped make these first responders safer as they patrol this rural part of the country. [WATCH VIDEO](#)

### Oglala Sioux Tribe Police Chief: FirstNet is critical in life-safety issues in Indian Country

**By Robert Ecoffey**

Chief of Police, Department of Public Safety  
Oglala Sioux Tribe



One of the challenges we had as a department was improving communication – especially when it came to officer safety and safety of the public. So we looked at various ways we could enhance our ability to communicate across the reservation.

We're the second largest police department in Indian Country in the United States. So we looked at systems to help our department and improve our service to the community in terms of response time.

We were the first law enforcement agency in Indian Country to sign up for FirstNet. And it's been a vast improvement for us.

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## Nationwide LTE coverage surpasses 2.61 million square miles to support FirstNet subscribers

Now covering more than 2.61 million square miles of the nation, we are aggressively expanding the LTE coverage area for the FirstNet public safety communications platform.

This means more first responders and the communities they serve – rural, urban and tribal – are gaining access to the critical communications capabilities they need.

"We've been on a mission for some time now to make AT&T's network not only the nation's fastest and most

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# Supporting COVID-19 emergency response from coast to coast

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communities count on most.

- **Emergency Operations Centers:** FirstNet liaisons have been embedded with state and federal emergency operations centers (EOC). This strengthens public safety's command and control of their network. And it helps ensure they have the mobile connectivity and devices they need to effectively respond to COVID-19.
- **FirstNet Fleet:** Public safety agencies on FirstNet have access to a dedicated fleet of 76 deployable cell sites at no additional charge. And the FirstNet Response Operations Group (ROG), a team of former first responders who manage the program in alignment with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and FEMA National Response Framework (NRF), leads the asset deployment.

"COVID-19 is an unprecedented event for the country – and in times of emergency, communication is critical," said Tim Ketchie, Communications Unit Leader, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "As we began mobilizing various quarantine locations across California, our commercial network devices were unable to handle the heavy data transmission needed to adequately communicate. We turned to FirstNet, and the quick action and network performance allowed us to support the hundreds of public safety personnel actively engaged in response efforts. It's been a game changer."

So far, we've deployed assets, optimized the network or provided FirstNet Ready™ devices to support quarantine zones, airports, EOCs and other public safety centers in areas such as:

- Port of Oakland, California
- Riverside, California
- San Diego, California
- New Haven, Connecticut
- Atlanta, Georgia

*"COVID-19 is an unprecedented event for the country – and in times of emergency, communication is critical."*

**– Tim Ketchie,**  
Communications Unit Leader,  
U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services

- Fulton County, Georgia
- Marietta, Georgia
- Rutledge, Georgia
- Nassau County, New York
- San Antonio, Texas

FirstNet is *the* nationwide, wireless communications platform dedicated to America's first responders and

Public safety agencies on FirstNet have access to a dedicated fleet of 76 deployable cell sites at no additional charge.

public safety community.

As men and women across the country stand on the front lines to support our nation's response to COVID-19, they can have confidence knowing that with FirstNet they'll have the unthrottled connectivity and priority communications they need to respond during this public health emergency.

It's this type of unparalleled emergency support that distinguishes FirstNet, public safety's network, from best-effort commercial wireless networks built for consumer use.

Serving public safety is our mission. It's our obligation and honor to earn public safety's trust day in and day out.

And that only happens by delivering on the bipartisan vision of Congress and the first responder community, and effectively serving as public safety's true communications network partner.

FirstNet subscribers seeking to request FirstNet support, please call 1-800-574-7000.

## Ecoffey: "FirstNet is critical in life-safety issues in Indian Country"

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We have 52 officers. And we cover 3,500 square miles on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Even our police radios are somewhat limited in certain areas because of the terrain, low valleys and high points.

### Communications challenges

I first realized there was a problem with communications in law enforcement when I was director of law enforcement for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

It was during 9/11. We had about 15 agents training at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. And we were asked to provide security at the Department of Interior building in Washington, D.C. We couldn't communicate with them by telephone because all the lines were tied up.

The only thing we had was pagers. So we were able to text them and say: "Okay, you need to leave the class and report to the Department of Interior building as soon as possible."

As a nation, 9/11 showed a critical weakness in our law enforcement infrastructure.

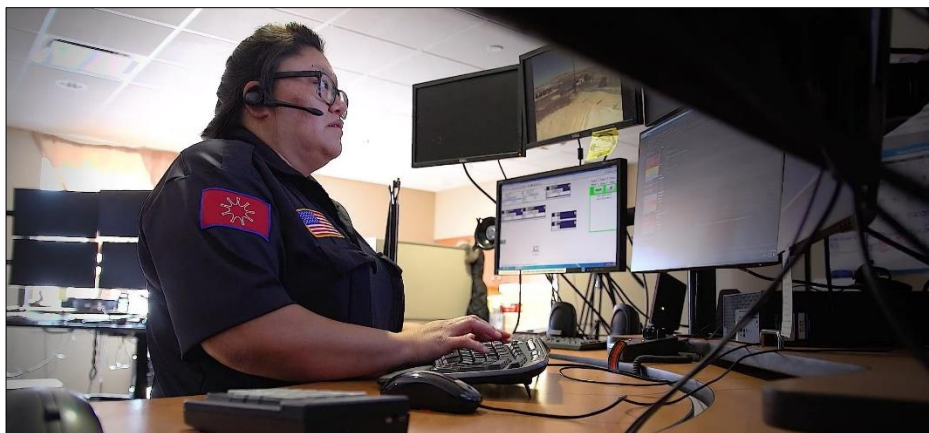
### First responder safety

Before FirstNet, we had a lot of areas across the reservation where officers would simply lose connectivity. There were times that we didn't have radio communication when responding to gun calls or emergency situations.

So it was critical in coming in as the new chief of police about a year-and-a-half ago to take a look at the infrastructure needs of the department. I sat down with the staff here.

And it was actually our technology expert, Tawny Zimiga, who arranged a meeting. We talked about FirstNet and what FirstNet could do for us in terms of continuing communication in the event of an emergency.

The biggest selling point with the system was the ability for our dispatch to monitor the locations of our officers. Now we can tell exactly where that officer is so that other officers can



*"Indian Country has been left behind for so many years in terms of infrastructure development... FirstNet is a first step in moving in that direction."*

*– Robert Ecoffey, Chief of Police, Oglala Sioux Tribe*

respond to possible emergencies to assist them.

This is not only important for officer safety, but for our ambulance service. We have to be able to get our emergency management folks out in times of blizzards, tornadoes or community events.

It's important we have the capability to work together. And it's incumbent upon us as a department to do whatever we can to speed our response to save people's lives.

### The right infrastructure

A system like FirstNet is critical in life-safety issues in Indian Country. Many of our reservations don't have the infrastructure because of our isolated locations across the United States.

So we have to develop our own services at many times to help our effort. It's a massive effort to get this infrastructure in place. On this reservation, through AT&T, we were able to get additional towers.

I may have somebody out here on dialysis or somebody in labor. And I need to get resources in here to get them to the hospital, simply because access to healthcare is also somewhat limited because of location. In considering FirstNet, again, it came down to officer safety.

It's critical for connectivity throughout Indian Country. All of our tribes need to work together to demand additional resources. So regardless of what department you work for within Indian Country – whether it's the Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal, county, local – that everybody has connectivity.

Indian Country has been left behind for so many years in terms of infrastructure development. We need to continue to look at better ways to address our issues.

FirstNet is a first step in moving in that direction.

*Robert Ecoffey grew up on the Pine Ridge Reservation and started his law enforcement career in 1975. In April 2017, he came out of retirement to take over as police chief for the Oglala Sioux Tribe. He previously served as a police officer with the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Chief Ecoffey had a 36 year career with the federal government – with 25 in law enforcement – including as director of law enforcement for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and as a special agent with the U.S. Forest Service. He was the first Native American to serve as a U.S. Marshal in South Dakota. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Chadron State College in Chadron, Neb.*



## OTHER NEWS

### Nationwide LTE coverage surpasses 2.61 million square miles

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reliable, but the nation's largest," said Chris Sambar, executive vice president, technology and operations, AT&T. "Despite what Verizon claims with their grossly outdated statistics, the truth is we added significantly more coverage than any other wireless provider last year – making our total coverage difference nearly imperceptible. And we're on target to add more coverage than them again this year. By expanding our wireless coverage footprint, we're laying the foundation for 5G, and we're bringing our nation's first responders the most expansive dedicated platform with innovative capabilities to strengthen their incident response wherever their mission takes them."

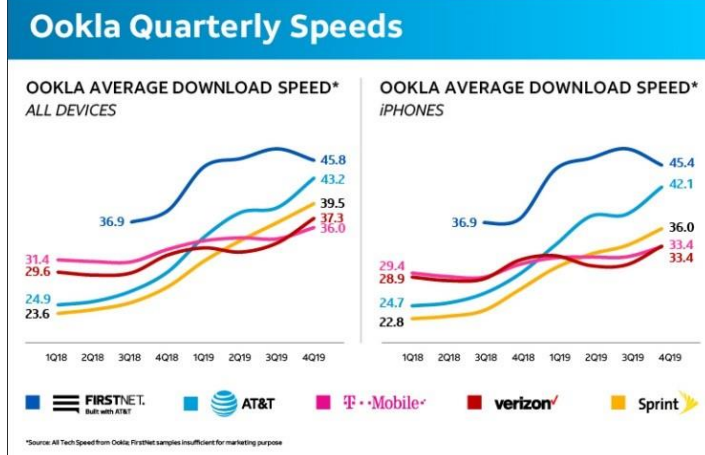
Last year alone, we added 120,000+ square miles. That's [more than twice the coverage growth](#) than the previous year, or an area equal to the entire state of New Mexico.

#### FirstNet: The Fastest Network Experience

The ongoing FirstNet network build is boosting overall network capacity and accelerating coverage expansion. It's also providing first responders with dedicated access when they need it, unique benefits like *always-on* priority and preemption, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities enabled FirstNet to perform faster than any commercial network<sup>1</sup> in 2019 and bring its subscribers the unthrottled connectivity they need.

"FirstNet isn't just any network, it is public safety's communications highway," said Jason Porter, senior vice president, FirstNet Program at AT&T. "As more and more public safety agencies turn to FirstNet for their communication needs – from [massive events](#) to emergency situations like [wildfires and hurricanes](#) – we remain steadfast in our commitment to aggressively expand the network and the innovative solutions first responders depend on. And this is only the beginning."

For example, during pro football's Big Game in Miami,



first responders using FirstNet, didn't have to compete with attendees' voice and data traffic. With the dedicated FirstNet network core, public safety's emergency communications came first.

In fact, public safety used almost 4 times as much data per user compared to fans, with traffic reaching its peak as tailgaters began to enter the stadium area. First responders conducted over 30,000 data sessions and roughly 3,000 calls during the Big Game. That's like streaming more than 100 hours of high-definition video without interference or interruption from fan selfies and social posts.

With more than 11,000 public safety agencies and organizations subscribed to FirstNet, accounting for over 1.2 million connections nationwide, first responders and those critical to their response continue to turn to *their network* for the purpose-built tools they need for their life-saving missions.

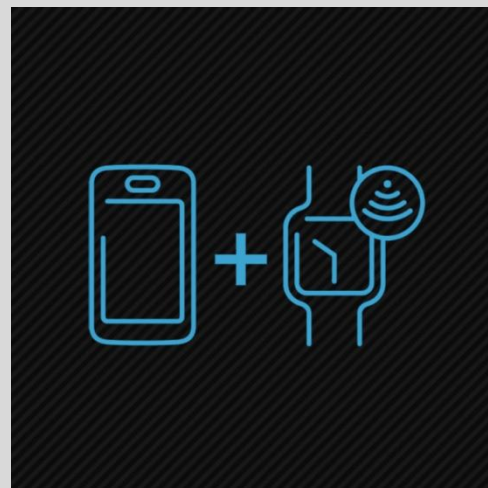
Check out [FirstNet.com](#) to learn more.

<sup>1</sup>Based on AT&T analysis of Ookla® Speedtest Intelligence® data average download speeds for Q4 2019. Ookla trademarks used under license and reprinted with permission.

## Connect Your Way

FirstNet Smartphone and Watch.  
Connect both just \$60.00/mo\*

\*Limited time. Not available in MA. Available only to eligible first responders with 2 Subscriber Paid User lines of service — 1 each of smartphone and watch. Smartphone req's line w/ FirstNet Mobile — Responder Unlimited plan (\$39.99/mo). Watch requires line w/unlimited voice & data svc. (\$25/mo). \$4.99 off after credits start w/in 3 bills. Additional fees, taxes & other charges, limits & restrictions apply. [Learn more](#)



# FirstNet makes commitment to IACP Officer Safety and Wellness initiative

Commitment continues  
AT&T's 12-year history of  
support for the IACP and  
law enforcement

FirstNet, Built with AT&T, is making a commitment to support the health and wellness of law enforcement officers.

FirstNet builder AT&T has collaborated with and supported the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) for more than 12 years. This year, through FirstNet, it built on that alliance and support by teaming up with the IACP for the 2020 Officer Safety & Wellness Symposium in Miami, Feb. 27-29.

Officer safety and wellness goes beyond the typical aspects, such as ballistic vests, body cameras, and weapons. Addressing and providing resources to officers across the country that focus on mental health, financial literacy, nutritional needs, sleep deprivation and injury reduction is a high priority for the IACP.

And, with FirstNet, officers have access to another layer of safety and security. The technology advancements made possible by FirstNet significantly improve officer communications and safety and increase their situational awareness.

Ultimately this aids officers with reliable, modern communications tools needed to keep them safe and perform at their best.

"We want to do our part to help keep officers safe and well for years to come," said Jason Porter, senior vice president, FirstNet Program at AT&T. "So, we're getting squarely behind public safety and the importance of wellness for every officer and the communities they serve. Our nation's first responders deserve solutions to this critical issue, so we are committing our support and resources to help."

FirstNet is tapping into the vast



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**"Improving officer safety and wellness enhances the health and effectiveness of officers, as well as the safety of the communities they serve."**

**Chief Steven R. Casstevens,**  
President of the IACP

knowledge and resources of the IACP and their understanding of what safety and wellness represents from an officer's perspective.

"Improving officer safety and wellness enhances the health and effectiveness of officers, as well as the safety of the communities they serve," said Chief Steven R. Casstevens, president of the IACP.

"We applaud FirstNet and AT&T for understanding that healthy police officers are important to us all and for their long-term commitment to this important endeavor."

FirstNet is public safety's dedicated, nationwide communications platform.

It's bringing public safety communications into the 21st century with new, innovative capabilities to strengthen first responders' incident response.

And it's helping them connect to the critical information they need – every day and in every emergency.

Check out [FirstNet.com](https://www.firstnet.com) to learn more.

## New features for FirstNet users

### Network Status Map Enhancements

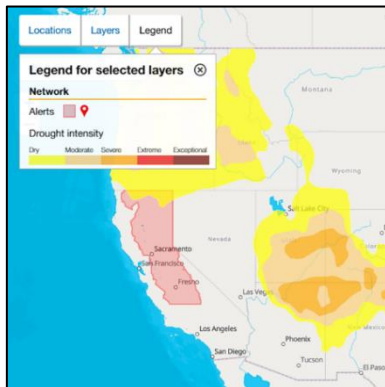
- **Increased Situational Awareness:**

In February, four new layers will be added to our Network Status Map to provide agencies increased situational awareness in the context of the

FirstNet Network. Find out how these changes will increase efficiency for you.

- Trauma Centers - Shows the location of a medical facility and trauma center level (I-IV)
- Flood Detail - Complements current "Flood Zone" alert
- Wind Direction - Complements current "High Wind" alert
- Drought Intensity - Complements current "Active Fire" alert

Contact us at [FNSolCatSales@list.att.com](mailto:FNSolCatSales@list.att.com) to learn more.



### FirstNet leader-led Training available

- To help you use and manage features of FirstNet Local Control, leader led training is currently available. These courses are intended for FirstNet
- [Instructor-led courses](#) help you learn to manage your administrative needs for FirstNet wireless services. Plus, you'll have an opportunity to ask questions and get answers from the instructor in real time. Each 1-hour course is designed to efficiently and effectively manage your FirstNet service and get answers to your questions in real time! These courses will enable you to:
  - Effectively use Uplift Management
  - Manage user profiles, services, and mobile devices
  - Shop for/customize: rate plans, wireless devices, and mobile solutions
  - View wireless-account reports and information.

### Paying your own bill? Apply and order online

- First responders can now go directly to [firstnet.com](http://firstnet.com) to apply for service and order devices for your individual lines of service through a simplified process.

And if you're an AT&T customer, you can even transfer your existing AT&T wireless number to your FirstNet account online. Just activate a FirstNet ID, log in, and begin shopping. Start the process now! [Apply today!](#)