TOP 10 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the First Responder Network Authority?

The First Responder Network Authority is the independent authority established by Congress to deliver a nationwide broadband network dedicated to public safety. The Network is strengthening public safety users' communications capabilities, enabling them to respond more quickly and effectively to accidents, disasters, and emergencies.

The First Responder Network Authority is led by a Board of leaders and executives from the public safety community; federal, state, and local govern-ments; and the technology, finance, and wireless sectors. It has a staff of about 200 employees with expertise in public safety, telecommu-nications, customer service, technology, procurement, and other areas needed to develop the Network. It is headquartered in Reston, VA, and has a technology center and lab in Boulder, CO.

2. What led to the creation of the First Responder Network Authority?

The 9/11 terrorist attacks brought to the forefront the many communications challenges that first responders face during emergencies and disasters. These issues were captured in the *9/11 Commission Report*, which identified gaps in emergency communications and recommended a nationwide network for law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical personnel communications.
The public safety community united to fulfill the 9/11 Commission's recommendation. Public safety organizations and associations advocated before Congress for a dedicated, reliable wireless network for first responders. Their advocacy efforts led to the passage of legislation in 2012 to create the agency to deploy the Network in all U.S. states and territories, including rural communities and tribal nations.

3. How has public safety been involved in the vision for the FirstNet network?

Public safety officials have worked closely with the First Responder Network Authority since its inception in 2012 to ensure the Network meets first responders' needs – today and in the future. The agency's outreach and consultation efforts have connected the organization to more than 1.8 million first responders and state public safety and technology executives across the country.

Specifically, the First Responder Network Authority has consulted extensively with state single points of contact (SPOCs) in each of the 50 U.S. states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia, as well as local/municipal, tribal and federal public safety leaders. It also coordinates with public safety through the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC), which provides guidance and subject matter expertise from a first responder perspective. Public safety leaders at the national, state and local levels continue to advocate for and support deployment of the Network.

4. How was AT&T selected to build, operate, and maintain the FirstNet network?

The First Responder Network Authority and the Department of Interior made the 25-year award based on the determination of the overall best value solution for FirstNet and public safety. The buildup to the award included a fair, competitive procurement process that began in January 2016 with release of the Network RFP.

The procurement process followed the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and encouraged offerors to provide innovative solutions that could meet or exceed the needs of public safety.

The procurement was open to all entities, whether traditional wireless companies or new entrants, provided their proposal could meet the RFP's statement of objectives. AT&T was selected on a best-value award that considered financial sustainability and was based on more than just a technically acceptable solution at the lowest cost. The evaluation of proposals assessed the offerors' ability to submit a cost-effective and innovative model, and to meet or exceed the 16 objectives and evaluation factors outlined in the FirstNet RFP.

5. Why is the Network being built and operated through a public-private partnership?

The First Responder Network Authority and AT&T are modernizing and improving public safety communications by leveraging private sector resources, infrastructure, and cost-saving synergies to deploy and operate the Network. This public-private model also helps keep costs down for American taxpayers. To do this, Congress used the sale of communications airwaves (or spectrum) to fund FirstNet's initial operations and help start network deployment; the $7 billion FirstNet received in initial funding came from FCC spectrum auction revenue, not taxpayer funds.

If the federal government were to build, maintain and operate this Network, the estimated cost would be tens of billions of dollars over 25 years. The Government Accountability Office has estimated it could cost up to $47 billion over 10 years to construct and operate the Network.

With this partnership approach, the First Responder Network Authority and AT&T do not need any additional federal funding to build and operate the Network – it is a fully funded, self-sustaining Network. In return, America's first responders get services far above and beyond what they have today over a first-class broadband network dedicated to their communications needs.

6. What are the key terms this public-private partnership?

Congress intended for the Network to be built and operated as a public-private partnership that brings together the best of the private sector, including commercial best practices, infrastructure, and resources – with the First Responder Network Authority's public safety expertise. This

approach will lead to a fully-funded, self-sustaining Network that will serve public safety for years to come. This business model is built upon the efficient use of resources, infrastructure, cost-saving synergies, and incentives, including:

- 20 MHz of federally owned spectrum and $6.5 billion in initial funding to the partnership; in return AT&T will deploy and operate a nation- wide high-speed broadband network for public safety over 25 years.
- AT&T will invest about $40 billion over the life of the contract to build, operate, deploy, and maintain the Network, and together with the First Responder Network Authority will help ensure the Network evolves with the needs of public safety.
- AT&T can use FirstNet's spectrum when it is not being used by public safety for other, commercial purposes. The company will prioritize first responders over any other com- mercial users.
- First Responder Network Authority will oversee the contract to ensure it delivers innovation, technology and customer care to public safety through various mechanisms, including subscriber adoption targets, milestone buildouts, disincentive fees and other mechanisms outlined in the contract.

7. What will the FirstNet Network provide first responders that they don't have today?

Today, in emergencies and at large events, heavy public use can lead to wireless communications networks becoming overloaded and inaccessible. In those instances, public safety users are treated the same as any other commercial or enterprise user, and communications can be limited due to congestion and capacity issues.

With the FirstNet Network, public safety will get a dedicated "fast lane" that provides highly secure communications every day and for every emergency. It will deliver specialized features to public safety that are not available on wireless networks today – such as priority access; preemption; more network capacity; and a resilient, hardened connection. The Network will deliver more than just a public-safety-dedicated wireless connection – it is also creating devices and apps ecosystems that will connect first responders to innovative, life-saving technologies.

8. How will the Network benefit first responders and help them do their jobs better?

FirstNet will improve communications, response times and outcomes for first responders from coast-to-coast, in rural and urban areas, inland and on boarders – leading to safer, and more secure communities. The Network will provide first responders with innovation and robust capacity so they can take advantage of advanced technologies, tools and services during emergencies, such as:

- Applications that allow first responders to reliably share videos, text messages, photos and other information during incidents in near real-time;
- Advanced capabilities, like camera-equipped connected drones and robots, to deliver images of wildfires, floods or other events;
- Improved location services to help with mapping capabilities during rescue and recovery operations; and
- Wearables that could relay biometric data of a patient to the hospital or alert when a fire fighter is in distress.

Network technology will also be tested and validated through the FirstNet Innovation and Test Lab, located in Boulder, CO, so first responders will have the proven tools they need in disasters and emergencies.

9. What's happening with FirstNet now?

All 50 states, five U.S. territories and Washington, D.C., have "opted in," to FirstNet, meaning each has accepted its individual State Plan detailing how the network will be deployed in their state/territory.

The First Responder Network Authority's public-private partnership with AT&T provides first responders with immediate access to mission-critical capabilities over the FirstNet network. This includes priority and preemption features that give first responders their own "fast lane" on the public safety network to communicate and share information during emergencies, large events, or other situations when commercial networks could become congested. FirstNet is the only broadband network with dedicated spectrum for public safety (Band 14) and 'always on' priority and preemption for access to the network even during times of network congestion.

Key FirstNet activities include:

Expanding the network and building out Band 14: The First Responder Network Authority has issued work orders to deploy the RANs. This gave AT&T the green light to expand FirstNet's footprint and deploy Band 14 capacity and coverage throughout the nation, providing first responders with the bandwidth, capacity, and public safety features they need to communicate, share information, and use innovative technologies every day and in every emergency.

Driving public safety innovation: FirstNet is also unlocking a new technology marketplace for public safety, enabling first responders to benefit from advancements in innovation. The FirstNet App Catalog is filling up with FirstNet-approved mobile apps that are optimized for public safety use over the Network.

Securing emergency communications: FirstNet's first-of-its-kind core infrastructure gives first responders the dedicated, highly secure, non-commercial network they deserve. The FirstNet Core, delivered in March 2018, provides encryption of public safety data over FirstNet and end-to-end cyber security. FirstNet subscribers also have access to a dedicated Security Operations Center, offering 24/7/365 support.

Creating a differentiated broadband communications experience for public safety: The First Responder Network Authority developed a new Roadmap to advance and evolve FirstNet beyond the current contractual commitments and to create opportunities for public safety to shape the future of their network. Based on input from the public safety community, the First Responder Network Authority Roadmap provides a view of emergency responders' critical communications needs and technology trends for mobile broadband communications over the next five years. The First Responder Network Authority will use the Roadmap to prioritize its programs, activities, and investments to ensure first responders have the communications tools they need to save lives and protect communities.

Engaging with public safety: The First Responder Network Authority will continue to engage with public safety in the states, territories, federal agencies, and tribal nations to understand their trends, drivers and priorities and collaborate with them to realize the operational benefits of FirstNet's differentiated broadband communications experience. Input gathered from public safety on their critical communications needs will continuously be incorporated into the First Responder Network Authority's Roadmap to help guide the growth, evolution, and advancement of FirstNet.

10. How can I learn more?

Stay up-to-date on the First Responder Network Authority activities and the building and deployment of FirstNet at www.firstnet.gov. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.