

U.S. Air Force Chooses FirstNet for Public Safety Communications Across 15 Bases

Oakton, VA., October 5, 2021 –

What's the news? The U.S. Air Force has selected [FirstNet®](#), [Built with AT&T](#) – the *only* nationwide high-speed broadband communications platform built with and for first responders and those who support them – to deliver reliable, *always-on* priority communications to its public safety personnel and, for first responders, preemption, on 15 bases across the country. The agreement struck between the Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC) and [AT&T*](#) provides for the delivery of FirstNet connectivity for 21 years: the remaining life of the public-private partnership between the U.S. government and AT&T.

Why is this important? Modernizing communications is a top priority for the U.S. Air Force and the Department of Defense. The Air Force is delivering on this strategy by investing to improve network coverage and adopting FirstNet initially across 15 bases while it considers expanding FirstNet accessibility to others.

FirstNet offers a wide range of mission-centric capabilities to support communications among base first responders and public safety personnel. It supports reliable, secure and [interoperable](#) communications among on- and off-base public safety personnel when collaborating to mitigate incidents that threaten the safety of airmen and the general public. Unlike commercial networks, FirstNet is built to public safety's strict specifications and requirements. And the FirstNet network comes with unique features, functionality, and a dedicated lane of connectivity for the Air Force's military and public safety community to help them connect to critical information they need when they need it.

In addition, with FirstNet, these U.S. Air Force bases will have access to a dedicated nationwide [fleet](#) of 100+ land-based and airborne portable cell sites stationed across the country to provide connectivity during significant events in support of public safety's mission. These critical response assets are available 24/7 at no additional charge.

How would the Air Force benefit from FirstNet? With a physically separate, dedicated core, FirstNet provides public safety personnel *always-on* priority and, for first responders, preemption, across LTE – Band 14 spectrum plus all of AT&T's commercial LTE spectrum



bands. Band 14 is nationwide, high-quality spectrum set aside by the government specifically for FirstNet that allows for capabilities that other spectrum bands don't. Plus, the FirstNet core has been upgraded to enable reliable 5G connectivity. These upgrades will allow these Air Force bases to have access to network connectivity with increased capacity and high throughput speeds on the FirstNet core, as well as 5G-powered network edge computing capabilities that will support increased bandwidth efficiencies and the creation of innovative edge-based solutions.

FirstNet offers these Air Force bases interoperability with existing land mobile radio assets and with first responders off base. FirstNet supports voice, data, and streaming video communications with priority and preemption among base and local community first responders when needed.

FirstNet is the first-ever nationwide network to introduce comprehensive tower-to-core encryption based on open industry standards. FirstNet traffic can be automatically secured as it moves from the cell tower, through the backhaul, to the core and back again. FirstNet continues to grow because it offers distinct advantages from commercial offerings. And the more than 17,000 agencies and organizations – accounting for more than 2.5 million connections nationwide – would agree.¹

What is FirstNet? FirstNet is the *only* nationwide, high-speed broadband communications platform dedicated to and purpose-built for America's first responders and the extended public safety community. Shaped by the vision of the first responder community and Congress following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, FirstNet stands above commercial offerings. It is built with AT&T in public-private partnership with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) – an independent agency within the federal government. The FirstNet network is providing public safety with truly dedicated coverage and capacity when they need it, unique benefits like *always-on* priority and preemption for first responders, and high-quality Band 14 spectrum. These advanced capabilities help fire, EMS, and law enforcement save lives and protect their communities.

What people are saying:

Lance Spencer, Client Executive Vice President – Defense, AT&T Public Sector and FirstNet

"We aim to be the network provider of choice as the Air Force moves more deliberately toward consuming advanced communications capabilities. It's an honor to deliver FirstNet



to support base personnel and first responders to help ensure the safety of each base and its surrounding community.”

Where can I find more information? Visit [FirstNet.com](https://www.firstnet.com) or Go [here](#) for more information about AT&T’s work in the public sector.

¹As of Q2 2021.

FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority.

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