

Customer Spotlight

Delivering Backup Connections

ICN Partners with FirstNet, Built with AT&T, for Public Safety Backup Connections

ICN is partnering with Iowa HSEMD to use FirstNet, Built with AT&T as the backup connection for Iowa-based Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) providing 9-1-1 services to Iowans.

ICN has deployed FirstNet LTE connections to 24 locations, harnessing the robust capabilities of FirstNet and enabling emergency dispatchers to share critical information about the scene of an incident to first responders in a highly secure manner.

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.



Customer: HSEMD

Industry: Public Safety

Service: Backup Connections for Iowa-based Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)

The ICN is used as the primary network provider for HSEMD and the 113 Iowa based PSAPs.

In the event the primary traffic route for 9-1-1 calls is damaged, the PSAPs connections will reroute to the FirstNet network to wirelessly connect redundant routers back to the PSAPs.



Partnering to Deliver Backup LTE Connections

Redundant Connections

In order for this redundant connection to work for 9-1-1 traffic, ICN established a separate virtual private network within the FirstNet infrastructure. This provided redundant connections for disaster recovery used for wireless and wireline 9-1-1 services.

FirstNet supplied ICN the ability to review tower information, which made deployment of the backup LTE connections easier. The tools deployed answered equipment questions about external antennas, line of sight issues, vertical interferences, etc.

The Public Safety Benefit

In 2017, HSEMD began an initiative to help the 113 PSAPs share equipment across centers. Currently, the PSAPs remote equipment is connected to the State's host equipment through the ICN.

The system setup provides a second, disparate connection to the 9-1-1 Network.

“ Adding FirstNet to the shared services environment helps ensure PSAPs continue to receive their calls even if the primary ICN connection goes down. At the end of the day, when someone calls 9-1-1, they expect to talk to a public safety telecommunicator 100% of the time. Our work with FirstNet makes that expectation more of a reality. ”

- Blake DeRouchey
9-1-1 Program Manager for HSEMD

FirstNet and Iowa

AT&T has blanketed Iowa with public safety's Band 14 – high-quality spectrum set aside by the federal government specifically for FirstNet – and launched new, purpose-built FirstNet cell sites to connect rural and remote areas.

“ The new FirstNet infrastructure is not only in major cities like Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, but also in smaller communities like Spencer and Estherville. Rural counties and rural sheriffs need communications just like the big cities. This is a huge project to take on to make sure the responders and agencies that support first responders have the network they need. ”

- David Barnett
Iowa's FirstNet Consultant

The Uniqueness of this Deployment

ICN's RAN (Radio Access Network) deployment is unique for FirstNet, since it encompasses multiple sites and spans the entire State.

“ There are smaller projects that are similar to what ICN has deployed, but overall from an implementation perspective, ICN's project is the largest of its type and is setting an example for other states. ”

- Larry Ewert
Principal Architect, FirstNet Program at AT&T

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I O W A C O M M U N I C A T I O N S N E T W O R K

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