

FirstNet Update

Welcome Message from Ray Lehr

Volume 1, Issue 1

Hello, and welcome to our first newsletter about the State of Maryland's work to plan for and deploy the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network. The Maryland Broadband Team is dedicated to engaging stakeholders in the planning process to ensure that the network is deployed to the level of service and reliability that Public Safety requires during emergencies and day-to-day operations. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our first responders to be involved in the process at the ground floor of designing a network dedicated just to them. The network will allow first responders to do their jobs more safely and efficiently by giving them the ability to share and receive information almost instantly. Imagine the possibilities: firefighters being able to track conditions inside a building on the way to a fire; police officers receiving surveillance video in the field from nearby CCTV cameras; paramedics consulting with an ER doctor via real-time video conference about the care of an injured patient. These are capabilities that the network can deliver. But we need your help to know how best to plan for this network in Maryland. What are your priorities, needs, expectations, concerns? As we continue to meet with, and learn from, public safety personnel across the state, we want to hear from you. Please let us know your thoughts. You can reach us at maryland.broadband@maryland.gov and via our website: <http://mdinterop-public.sharepoint.com>

- Ray Lehr, Statewide Interoperability Director and FirstNet Single Point of Contact

Text to 9-1-1 Provides Additional Public Safety Contact Method Where Available

It's not a surprising number from the National Emergency Number Association: 70 to 80 percent of the calls that most of the 9-1-1 centers across the country now receive are from mobile phones. And as more and more people give up their home landlines and rely exclusively on mobile phones that percentage is expected to rise even higher during the next several years. Eight in 10 people also use their cell phones to send and receive text message. But, except in a few areas of the country, you can't communicate via text messaging with a 9-1-1 center, also called a public safety answering point or PSAP.

It seems like a good emergency policy that in instances where it's unsafe or impossible to place a voice call to 9-1-1, such as during a hostage or active shooter situation, or for people with hearing or speech difficulties, that texting 9-1-1 for help would be ideal.

[More Details](#)



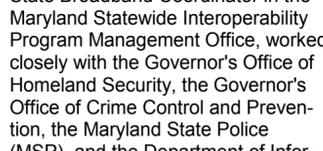
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Newsletter Highlights

This month starts out with a welcome message from the SPOC himself, Ray Lehr.

We have articles on Text to 9-1-1, Safety Technology Forums, as well as Lessons Learned from our recent conference experiences.

State Public Safety Technology Forums Recap



Working with Maryland's Statewide Interoperability Office, the CHHS staffers that make up the Maryland Broadband Team played a key role in three recent public safety forums that helped spread the word about the State's progress with its public safety technology programs and how agencies around the State can get involved. Lori Stone, CHHS Senior Law and Policy Analyst, working as the State Broadband Coordinator in the Maryland Statewide Interoperability Program Management Office, worked closely with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security, the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, the Maryland State Police (MSP), and the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to organize and host the forums. They were held in April in three regions across the State: the Western Regional Forum in Frederick; the Central Regional Forum in Hanover; and the Eastern Regional Forum in Easton.

[Read More on the Forums Here](#)

Lessons Learned at the Maryland Emergency Preparedness Association Conference:

As part of the [@MDInterOp](#) team, we had the opportunity to introduce FirstNet to the folks attending the [Maryland Emergency Management Association](#) 2014 Conference in Ocean City, MD.

This annual conference draws hundreds of emergency managers, first responders, public health officials, and civic leaders from all levels of government – making it a perfect opportunity to get the FirstNet message out! We bought our booth, printed our handouts, set up our demonstration gear, and started having conversations with attendees. Here are some of the lessons we learned from the vendor-booth trenches...

- **Start Basic—many people don't realize the need for FirstNet**
- **The FirstNet brand isn't strong yet**
- **Short Actionable Message**
- **People are suspicious of salesmen**
- **They'll believe it when they see it**

Learn all of the lessons we learned at the MdEMA Conference in Ocean City, MD at Christopher Webster's ["Emergency Management Expert" Blog](#).

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