



# STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA: Industry Partnerships

*Bridging Public Safety Communications*

## OPERATION SUMMARY

The Mobility 4 Public Safety (M4PS) team worked with North Carolina Department of Emergency Management (NCEM) and NC FirstTech to develop an unconventional model to accommodate the State's request to allow private industry partners to utilize Bridge4PS during disaster response, while not compromising the platform's exclusive, public safety user base.

As the use of Bridge4PS grew across the State of NC, particularly for disaster response during a very active hurricane season, state officials recognized a stark contrast in their coordination with government stakeholders using Bridge4PS and non-governmental personnel using other legacy platforms. They anticipated that enabling non-public safety partners, such as telecommunications providers, to collaborate directly with public safety personnel in Bridge4PS could significantly improve response operations for restoring essential communications services after catastrophic disasters.

State officials worked with M4PS and the Bridge4PS user community to develop a model that protected the exclusive content available only to authorized public safety practitioners while also allowing collaboration with other essential response personnel supporting public safety operations.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Collaboration between public safety & telco partners
- Efficiently restored essential communications infrastructure

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Improved efficiency of response coordination
- Bridge4PS was "rally point" for collaboration

## KEY FEATURES

- Inclusion of Non-PS Users
- Sponsored Non-PS User accounts
- Restricted permissions
- Controlled content visibility

***"The ability to collaborate with telecommunications partners has helped to improve effective response coordination for efficiently restoring critical communications services for the first responders and residents of North Carolina."***

**- Red Grasso, NC FirstTech**

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## HOW IT WORKS

Public safety users can sponsor Non-Public Safety partners. Public safety users control account access, permissions and content visibility for all Non-PS users. Sponsors are required to periodically reauthorize their Non-PS sponsees and notify M4PS when a sponsee is no longer in an operational support role.

Once the account is created, Non-PS users can fully collaborate with members of any channels they are invited into by public safety channel owners and direct message (DM) initiated by PS users.

## POINTS OF CONTACT

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## BALANCING OBJECTIVES

Bridge4PS was built with 9 strategic objectives, including:

- Maintain an exclusive public safety user base
- Support all public safety operational use cases

This use case highlighted how these were competing objectives, and both could not be achieved simultaneously for these types of situations. As a platform built *By Public Safety, For Public Safety*, a working group was convened with representatives from various agencies and disciplines across the country. The working group developed a set of recommendations which included:

1. Defining a broader set of eligibility categories
2. Creating a restricted role for users who fall outside the traditional definition of public safety/first responders
3. Requiring non-traditional support personnel to be sponsored by an authorized public safety official
4. Requiring the purchase of a Non-PS license to offset costs of operating the system for the core public safety users

The Working Group authored a paper with its recommendations which was published for the entire Bridge4PS user community with a comment period. With no objections, the program was implemented and has since delivered transformational results for the public and private sector stakeholders in NC.

## OUTCOMES

This hybrid solution addressed both objectives simultaneously by protecting public safety content through controlled access & restricted permissions, while allowing for collaboration with private industry stakeholders supporting public safety operations.

The operational benefits of this program are indisputable:

- ✓ Improved coordination for large, disaster response/restoration operations
- ✓ Enhanced situational awareness for everyday comms events
- ✓ Reduced service restoration times for critical infrastructure outages

Learn more about our Eligibility Criteria at:  
<https://www.bridge4ps.com/eligibility>



Req Access