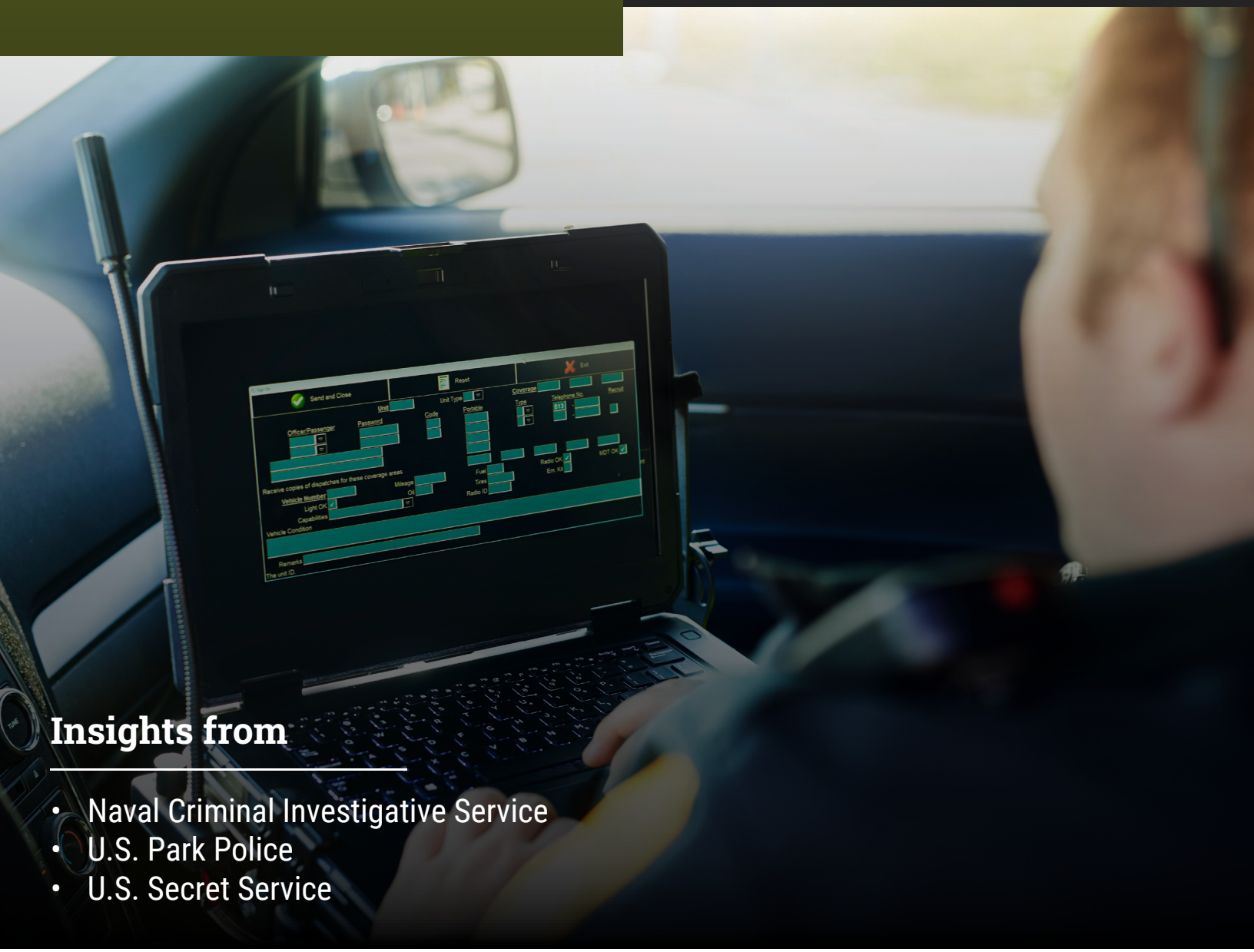
FEDERAL NEWS NETWORK

EXPERT EDITION

Ready for anything: Learn how federal law enforcement agencies embrace new tech, 5G



Insights from

- Naval Criminal Investigative Service
- U.S. Park Police
- U.S. Secret Service

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On the front lines of collaboration

No federal law enforcement organization works alone. These agencies are the ultimate team players, regularly depending on local and state organizations as well as industry partners to help them with their assignments.

Although the federal government is home to some of the nation's oldest law enforcement groups — the U.S. Park Police have been around since the late 1700s, after all — they aim to deploy the latest technologies.

"Computer technology, cell phone technology, cloud-based technology — that's all always improving, and it's always evolving," notes Park Police Sgt. Thomas Twiname.

A large part of the desire to invest in and implement new technology comes from the need to collaborate closely with other law enforcement organizations. It's essential to meeting the mission, Twiname and leaders from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and U.S. Secret Service told Federal News Network during interviews.

"Our agents will work with local, state and other federal agencies so we can pick up the phone, communicate and say, 'Hey, I need your help,' or 'Can you give me some advice?' " points out Secret Service Chief Information Officer Kevin Nally. "It's really important."

5G and smartphones are the order of the day, but so are many other tools and technologies. In the pages ahead, we take a peek behind the scenes at these three agencies and hear from people inside those organizations about what's driving their technology modernization efforts.

We also talk with two Verizon federal experts about how they partner with federal law enforcement agencies to prepare and be ready no matter the crime, disaster or other worst-case scenario they encounter.

We hope you find the insights and information helpful for your own "blue sky preparation" and meeting the needs of your teams on the front line.

Vanessa Roberts
Editor, Custom Content
Federal News Network

How NCIS uses tech 'bridge' to maintain relationships with other agencies

BY WFED STAFF

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service operates globally and is responsible for investigating crimes and criminal activity related to the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Comprised of about 2,000 personnel, NCIS is unique among military criminal investigative organizations as it is a civilian-run agency and is headed by a civilian law enforcement professional who reports directly to the secretary of the Navy.

It is responsible for investigating crimes ranging from espionage and terrorism to murder and sexual assault.

"We have a strong focus on the counterintelligence side and the national security side," said Laukik Suthar, an executive assistant director with NCIS.

The agency operates in approximately 191 locations in more than 40 countries.

It works closely with other law enforcement agencies, both domestic and international, to gather intelligence and prevent threats before they can harm military personnel or infrastructure.

"If there's an espionage investigation, we focus on protection of secrets, ensuring that nothing is being sent out that shouldn't be sent out and ensuring that people aren't leaking information out either," Suthar said.

Cutting-edge tech brings new opportunities

The emergence of 5G technology has the potential to greatly enhance the ability of NCIS to carry out its mission.

One of the key benefits of 5G is its speed and bandwidth capabilities.

With 5G, NCIS can transmit large amounts of data quickly and efficiently, enabling agents to access critical information in real time.

That can be particularly useful in situations where time is of the essence, such as during a crisis or emergency.

"It's not just communicating from point to point. We're talking about how you communicate to the helicopter or the plane," Suthar said. "You might be working with another organization that has to

transfer large amounts of information, and 5G has that capability."

Another advantage of 5G is its ability to support a wide range of connected devices.

That can allow NCIS to deploy numerous pieces of equipment, such as cameras and sensors, to monitor and secure Navy and Marine Corps installations and infrastructure.

For instance, 5G-connected cameras could provide real-time surveillance of sensitive areas, while sensors could detect and alert NCIS agents to potential security breaches.

In addition to its speed and connectivity capabilities, 5G can support more advanced technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence.

Those tools may be used to analyze and process large amounts of data, such as social media activity or video footage, to identify potential threats or criminal activity.

Joining forces with other agencies

Agents with NCIS frequently operate in locations where local, state or foreign law enforcement agencies have primary jurisdiction, meaning that partnering with other law enforcement entities is essential.

Through those partnerships, agencies can work together to address criminal incidents, identify and mitigate threats to U.S. naval forces and assets, and pursue joint proactive operations.

There can sometimes be a technology "language barrier," however.

"Different people are operating on different frequencies all the time," Suthar said. "You have your traditional radios, Bluetooth, hard phone lines and also the phone you use on a regular basis just to communicate using 4G, LTE or 5G."

It presents unique challenges, especially when communication between various agencies is needed immediately during a high-risk operation.

"Devices are not going to be compatible all the time," Suthar said. "Some agencies aren't going to have the same type of capability or advancement as others, so we've got to have a bridge."

It's not just communicating from point to point. We're talking about how you communicate to the helicopter or the plane.

– Laukik Suthar, Executive Assistant Director, Naval Criminal Investigative Service

Leaders on the state and local levels have jurisdiction over crimes that occur within their respective regions, which can often intersect with NCIS investigations.

That's why it's so important for NCIS to not only create relationships with state and local law enforcement agencies but to constantly reinforce and maintain them.

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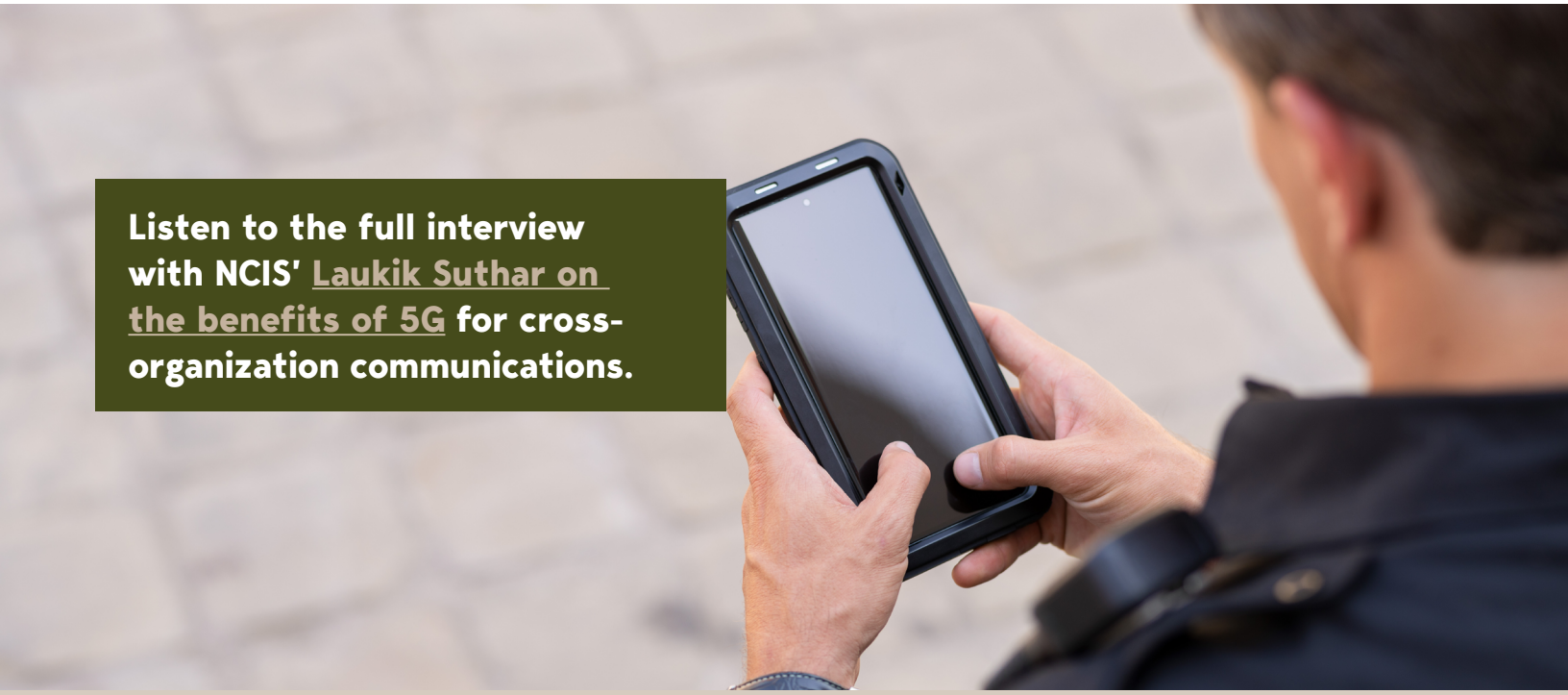
>
> **– NCIS' Laukik Suthar**

Long-standing partnerships between agencies can provide NCIS with vital information and resources.

"If it's the first time you meet with an organization, it takes some time to understand each other's systems," Suthar explained. "Once you build the relationship, it's an easy call from our technical specialists with their technical specialists, and they get together and the system is already set up and you have it in a common language."

Additionally, state and local agencies often have a more thorough understanding of local criminal networks and social dynamics, which can help NCIS identify potential suspects, informants or witnesses that might not have been discovered otherwise.

"That communication where individuals are working with one another is key, especially with our organization," Suthar said. "It happens every single day, and it just doesn't stop."



Listen to the full interview with NCIS' Laukik Suthar on the benefits of 5G for cross-organization communications.

U.S. Park Police sergeant says interoperability 'makes us all stronger'

BY WFED STAFF

The U.S. Park Police is a federal law enforcement agency with a unique mission to protect the public and park resources within the National Park Service system.

Created in 1791, it is one of the oldest uniformed federal law enforcement agencies in the country.

"We serve a very distinct role because we have a very large community presence," U.S. Park Police Sgt. Thomas Twiname said.

Park Police officers are located in the Washington, D.C., New York City and San Francisco metropolitan areas.

The agency is responsible for the law enforcement and security services at more than 80 parks, monuments, memorials and other sites under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, including major national landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty and the National Mall.

"It provides us the opportunity to experience a lot of career growth and career development, with various opportunities within our organization as well as having the ability to work in several geographic areas within the country," Twiname said.

The primary mission of the Park Police is to protect visitors, park resources and government property while also enforcing federal laws and providing emergency response services.

Officers receive extensive training in a variety of areas, including criminal investigations, crowd management, emergency medical services and counterterrorism.

They work closely with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of the parks and their visitors.

The importance of working together

The practice of developing and maintaining relationships with state and local agencies allows the Park Police to effectively coordinate emergency response efforts and share intelligence.

Building partnerships with other agencies helps to establish clear communication and facilitate coordination in times of

crisis, and it helps to promote a sense of collaboration and mutual support.

For example, when responding to a natural disaster or other emergency, the Park Police may need to work closely with local law enforcement, fire departments and other first responders to ensure an effective and timely response.

“Agency cooperation and agency interoperability are a very essential component to our mission that we do on a daily basis,” Twiname said. “The relationship that we have with these partners — whether that be at a local, state, regional or even a federal level — makes us all stronger.”

Twiname said one of the most vivid examples of interoperability came in January 1982, when an Air Florida jet trying to fly out of D.C. in a snowstorm crashed into the 14th Street Bridge before plunging into the Potomac River.

As the aircraft attempted to climb, it became clear that it was not gaining altitude as expected. The pilots attempted to correct the problem by increasing engine thrust, but it was too late. The crash killed 78 people in all, including 74 on the plane and four on the ground.

“It was really one of those things that was at the forefront at a time when interoperability was just sort of in an infancy stage,” Twiname said. “It showcased the importance of being able to work with partners in law enforcement, taking into consideration fire departments and the Coast Guard.”

Agency cooperation and agency interoperability are a very essential component to our mission that we do on a daily basis.

– Sgt. Thomas Twiname, U.S. Park Police

The various agencies worked together to provide an effective response, which included search and rescue operations, recovery of victims and investigation of the crash.

Better tech plays a critical role

The Park Police has benefited from the adoption of more advanced technology in recent years, which has led to improved efficiency, effectiveness and safety for the agency.

“We’re constantly evaluating the technology that we can use to help us do our job,” Twiname said. “Technology never slows down.”

Just as smartphones have changed everything for civilians, advanced communication tools have opened up new opportunities for the Park Police.

Officers now communicate with one another and with other law enforcement agencies in real time.

It enables them to quickly respond to incidents, coordinate resources and share critical information, which can be instrumental in preventing and solving crimes.

“There are always open lines of communication,” Twiname said. “We have the ability to talk to the people that we need to talk to instantly, which is a huge benefit to us.”

According to Twiname, cutting-edge technology has been particularly helpful for officers who are investigating crash scenes, for example.

The investigations are now more concise and more detailed, and officers are able to get major roadways cleared more quickly.

> Computer technology, cell phone technology, cloud-based technology – that's all always improving, and it's always evolving.
>
> **– U.S. Park Police's Sgt. Twiname**

“Computer technology, cell phone technology, cloud-based technology — that’s all always improving, and it’s always evolving,” Twiname said.

Listen to the full interview with U.S. Park Police Sgt. Thomas Twiname on the value of evolving technology to policing.

In-house tech tools help the Secret Service meet its mission

BY WFED STAFF

The U.S. Secret Service is a well-known federal agency with a mandate to protect the president, vice president and their families, as well as to investigate financial and cybercrimes.

To do that effectively, the agency must develop and utilize close partnerships with state and local agencies.

Law enforcement officials on the state and local levels are often the first responders to incidents that may involve the president or other designated individuals.

For example, if the president is visiting a city, local law enforcement will be responsible for securing the area around the event and managing any crowd control issues.

“If the president wants to go to Richmond, Virginia, then agents are going to work with law enforcement agencies in and around Richmond,” said Kevin Nally, chief information officer for the Secret Service.

By working closely with other agencies, the Secret Service can ensure that local law enforcement is trained and equipped to handle the unique security challenges that come with guarding the president and other high-level officials.

“They’ll do protection and work together in a coordinated effort, and that’s huge,” Nally said.

If the Secret Service is investigating a crime, state and local agencies may have information about individuals or organizations that are involved in illegal activities.

By sharing that information, state and local officials can help to ensure that crimes are effectively investigated and prosecuted.

“Our agents will work with local, state and other federal agencies so we can pick up the phone, communicate and say, ‘Hey, I need your help,’ or ‘Can you give me some advice?’ ” Nally said. “It’s really important.”

As they work together and share information, the various agencies can build strong working relationships that can help to improve overall security and public safety.

A truly prestigious agency

Just about every single person living in the United States has heard of the Secret Service.

It is a prestigious and critically important organization.

"It's an honor to come here every day to work for and support the Secret Service," Nally said. "It's just an extremely professional and precise workforce."

Before his current role, Nally spent more than 30 years in the Marine Corps.

He retired from military service in 2015, but he quickly realized that he missed the fast-paced team environment that he thrived in while serving in the armed forces.

"During my time in the Marines, I'd go home at night, and I felt like I really provided value to something greater than myself," Nally said.

He went looking for something that gave him a comparable level of satisfaction.

"I really feel comfortable here at the Secret Service," Nally said. "With my background being a Marine, I didn't have to prove anything to anybody, and I was well-accepted and well-integrated."

Secret Service apps are different

Technological advancements have played a crucial role in helping the Secret Service carry out its mission.

> We have 5G on our government-issued cell phones. That has been beneficial in terms of speed.
>
> **– Kevin Nally, Chief Information Officer, U.S. Secret Service**

In particular, improvements in communication tools have greatly enhanced the agency's ability to react in the face of emergencies or potential threats, Nally said.

One of the key ways that cutting-edge communications tools have helped the Secret Service is by providing real-time communication and information-sharing capabilities.

The Secret Service now uses encrypted radios and other communication devices that enable agents to connect instantly with one another, regardless of their location.

That lets agents quickly respond and coordinate with other law enforcement agencies in a way that was not possible before.

"We have 5G on our government-issued cell phones," Nally said. "That has been beneficial in terms of speed."

With the advent of new tools, such as advanced smartphones and encrypted messaging apps, agents can communicate more effectively and securely.

"When I first got here, we were using Windows phones, and that wasn't providing much capability for the operators," Nally explained.

The agency explored a number of smartphone options and ultimately ended up choosing the Apple iPhone as the main device for Secret Service personnel.

Apps used by people in the Secret Service are not your average apps, however.

"Literally, we develop in-house apps within the Secret Service," Nally said. "I'll caveat that by saying we do have contractors that assist us, but they work for us."

The apps go through a special agency cybersecurity process before employees are allowed to download them onto their personal devices or their government-issued iPhones.

> We develop in-house apps within the Secret Service. I'll caveat that by saying we do have contractors that assist us, but they work for us.
>
> **– U.S. Secret Service's Kevin Nally**

"No one in the Secret Service can go to the App Store and say, 'I like this app so I'm going to download it,' " Nally said. "You just can't do that."

Listen to the full interview with the U.S. Secret Service's Kevin Nally on the ways the agency taps technology to meet its mission.

Verizon prepares for public safety events, helps federal law enforcement with 'blue sky preparation'

PROVIDED BY VERIZON FRONTLINE

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"Blue sky preparation" refers to the process of proactively preparing for incidents, practicing deployments, testing interoperability with partners and the like when there is no active engagement. "Blue sky" is a way of lining up resources so they are in place and ready to go when "gray sky" days come around.

It is a crucial aspect of any partnership between a telecommunications company like Verizon and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as other federal, state and local partners because it enables everyone to work together effectively in the pursuit of national security and public safety with respect to critical communications.

"Blue sky preparation is extremely important," said John Larregui, a managing partner with Verizon.

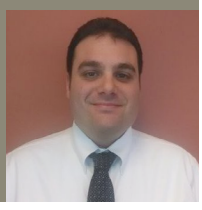
The primary responsibilities of Larregui, his team and the Verizon Frontline Crisis Response Team are to help ensure that federal agencies are receiving the critical communications that they need 24/7.

"If we know that a hurricane is coming, we can preposition our assets," Larregui said.

"If we know that something is happening with the Department of Justice, we can preposition assets and we can get people in place so that when something may or may not happen, we're ready."

By engaging in blue sky preparation, Verizon and federal law enforcement agencies can identify potential response and communications bottlenecks and develop enhanced training approaches. Additionally, strategies can be developed to help address concerns before they

> With the thousands of pieces of hardware and devices and tools that we have, we have to make sure they're up and ready from a deployment standpoint and a user standpoint.
>
> **– Andrew Fusco, Frontline Crisis Response Manager, Verizon**



become serious problems when a gray sky event occurs.

That may involve sharing intelligence with other federal, state, local and industry partners or collaborating on security measures such as network monitoring, threat analysis and incident response planning.

Ultimately, the success of any partnership between Verizon and law enforcement agencies depends on the ability to work together in a rapidly evolving threat landscape.

“With the thousands of pieces of hardware and devices and tools that we have, we have to make sure they’re up and ready from a deployment standpoint and a user standpoint,” said Andrew Fusco, a Verizon frontline crisis response manager.

When heading to the scene of an emergency, for example, first responders don’t want to make themselves any more vulnerable than they already are.

“The last thing you want is to have an incident where you’re scrambling to get hardware that needs an update, and you don’t have the capacity to do the update in the field,” Fusco said. “It is always better to identify those communications concerns early versus in an active deployment.”

Preparedness among feds and Verizon

Federal law enforcement agencies employ a range of strategies and tactics to prepare for responses to a host of threats and emergencies. The preparations are designed to ensure that they are able to respond quickly and effectively to any situation, from a manhunt to a terrorist attack.

One of the most important aspects of preparation for law enforcement agencies is training, which Verizon often plays a role in.

“There’s nothing better than to be in that open environment and have the ability to have something fail and fix it in the field,” Fusco explained. “The agencies are so open to that partnership when they’re in the field with us, and we’re both learning side by side.”

Strong partnerships between federal law enforcement agencies and state and local agencies are essential.

Federal law enforcement agencies work closely with other government agencies and first responders to ensure a coordinated response to any emergency.

That involves establishing clear lines of communication, situational awareness, sharing information and resources and collaborating on response plans.

“In many cases, local agencies or state agencies are responsible for what’s happening in their area, so the federal government or the federal agencies come in to help support them,” Larregui said. “It’s going to be state, local and federal working together because nobody can do it alone.”

> You can utilize new technology that wasn't available in the past and put it on that network, and you're going to get that seamless video.
>
> **– John Larregui, Managing Partner, Verizon**

New tech for now and the future

The latest developments with 5G technology have the potential to greatly enhance preparatory activities for federal law enforcement agencies by providing faster and more reliable communication, data transfer and real-time monitoring capabilities.

Law enforcement agencies can transmit large amounts of data and video feeds more quickly and efficiently than with previous cellular or communications technologies.

That can help enable more robust communication and collaboration between agencies, allowing them to coordinate response efforts more effectively.

"What 5G is going to help bring to the front lines is that high-speed, low-latency capability," Fusco said. "Law enforcement agencies and fire departments are using more and more video — which is a high-bandwidth solution to get situational awareness and understanding of an incident — and 5G allows for that to stream in real time and in high def."

In addition, 5G can support the use of advanced technologies such as drones, autonomous vehicles and facial recognition systems.

"You can utilize new technology that wasn't available in the past and put it on that network, and you're going to get that seamless video," Larregui said. "This technology is always changing, and there are more and more uses for it every single day."

For federal law enforcement agencies, blue sky preparation is important because they are responsible for investigating and preventing some of the most serious and complex crimes and threats to national security.

By engaging in blue sky preparation, agencies can gather intelligence on potential threats and criminal activities, identify key players and organizations involved and develop strategies to disrupt or prevent their activities.

It can help to prevent attacks before they occur and protect the safety and security of individuals and the nation as a whole.

Listen to the full interview with Verizon's Andrew Fusco and John Larregui on teaming and training with federal law enforcement to be ready for any threat scenario.