

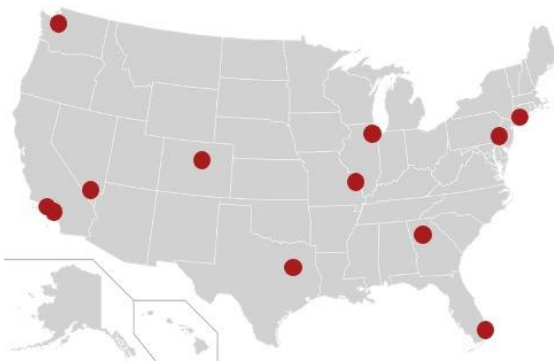
BACKGROUND

The Big City Fire Working Group (BCF) brings together representatives from 12 of the largest fire departments in the United States, as measured by number of stations and operational personnel. BCF members are senior leaders who understand the highest priorities of their departments and collaborate to identify and discuss the needs and challenges of fighting fire in dense urban settings.

The geographically dispersed BCF is organized under the [First Responder Resource Group \(FRRG\)](#), a multi-disciplinary group of approximately 120 emergency responders who volunteer their time and expertise to help the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) prioritize the top unmet capability needs and operational requirements of responders in the field. FRRG members come from a broad range of disciplines, levels of government and regions across the country.

DHS S&T's [National Urban Security Technology Laboratory \(NUSTL\)](#) convenes and manages the BCF in support of the Directorate's first responder portfolio and is responsible for setting strategy, executing process and identifying potential research, development, test and evaluation opportunities associated with the group.

PARTICIPATION



Currently, the departments that participate in BCF represent cities across the nation: New York City, Philadelphia, Miami, Atlanta, Chicago, St. Louis, Dallas, Denver, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County and Seattle. Department-selected representatives include operational leaders, financial staff and technology specialists. These members lead and contribute to solutions-seeking discussions and review documents and other outputs developed by S&T.



BCF is a forum for discussions about the most common and critical issues faced by its member departments to enable the development of needs-driven projects and courses of action to address firefighter-identified challenges. By increasing understanding of the problems particular to large urban fire services, the group is equipping S&T to better meet [one of its own priorities](#): identifying pressing needs, applicable existing technologies and operational solutions to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of the nation's first responders.

GATHERINGS

BCF meets virtually each month to further projects focused on current technology, standards, safety and more. When a specific issue needs to be addressed, subgroups form and meet virtually on a regular basis to work on the topic. BCF meets in-person annually in one of the BCF cities to frame future efforts based on emerging threats and operational challenges. NUSTL hosted the inaugural annual meeting in July 2021; since then, the meetings have been hosted by one of the BCF departments in the city they serve.

OUTCOMES

Outcomes of the working group include identifying capability gaps for S&T, giving input on product enhancements or features to technology developers and informing standards and NUSTL publications for responders, such as white papers, guides and requirements documents. BCF members' unique perspectives and expertise help to advance the activities of DHS, the homeland security enterprise and other partners in addressing the needs of the fire service.