

Don McGarry: We respond to a lot of 9-1-1 calls every day and things really need to work.

There's a lot of running messages back and forth between the folks that are on scene command to kind of know what the various services are doing, what their status is.

If we were able to track that using some technology tools, those on scene commanders would know what's going on inherently.

Victoria Anthony: Safety is always a priority. We go into some of these high-rise buildings in the basements, and we're investigating things which sometimes are the most dangerous places to be, and we don't have communication. That's a tough, tough spot you're in.

Dan Cotter: The Next Generation First Responder Apex Project is an effort where we're trying to bring together all of our research and development investments in order to ensure that the future first responder is protected against all the hazards that they face during their job, that they're connected to their peers, to their commanders and to the citizens that they need to support through their radios, Smartphones, other devices including the future of public safety broadband, and they're fully aware that they have the information that they need to do their job.

Victoria Anthony: Going through a building, being able to track where the firefighters are in the building so if you do have a Mayday that we're able to respond to that and know exactly, pinpoint exactly where that firefighter is down.

Jay Farr: Not only do I want to know where they are, I want the officers on the street to have the ability to have good situational awareness.

My goal here is that the officer doesn't take eyes off of what they're looking at because you get a heads up display. Could you get something in that officer's line of vision that would continue to bring that information up as they go?

In the best world if I could put sensors on them, I would look at something intelligent but obviously the most common, the chem-bio threats, the gas threats, I would be very interested in having some kind of sensor that allows us to identify explosive devices, that I can do trace analysis in the air for suicide bombers or some of the stuff that our officers are more likely to face.

If you don't know the 27 different talk groups, then you don't know the 27 channels within those 27 different talk groups, it can be somewhat cumbersome if you're not really used to it. So a better way could be managed through an emergency communication center that when we have an event go on they know which things that they're gonna patch through immediately.

Jay English: When the boots hit the ground on the scene, if a police officer has a tactical picture of where an active shooter is they're know where to vector their response. If a firefighter knows what side of the house the fire is on, where the exposures are, they'll know where to put the engines and hoses. It's very important to be able to control an incident not just respond to it.

Dan Cotter: Next Generation First Responder Apex Project is about supporting the mission of the public safety community. This is their mission. Our job is to understand what they need and support them.

We need your input so we make sure we get that right.

Don McGarry: S&T's role is really gonna be to focus on how do these different components like wearables, computing, sensing, communications, visualization; how do they plug in and interact with one another and allow for responders to be able to procure equipment that they know will work with the other pieces of equipment that they have?

Jay English: Probably one of the most important things S&T is helping in here is creating solutions not only that public safety can use but, with the leverage the federal government has, creating solutions that we can afford.

The overarching goal for this program, and I think most folks would agree, is saving lives. How do we give responders the tools to save lives? And how do we keep responders safe doing it? And as a responder for many years, I don't think there's any better goal out there.