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# 5G on the front lines: Police and law enforcement agencies

# Why reliable connectivity is vital for effective law enforcement

Police agencies around the world face enormous pressures. As they strive to maintain law and order in often-volatile circumstances, wireless technologies are offering innovative solutions to their pain points.

Law enforcement today operates in complex and dangerous environments, shaped by societal and operational pressures. These challenges are reflected in recruitment difficulties: 70 percent of US agencies report that attracting new officers is more difficult than it was five years ago.[1] The public perception of agencies is also declining, with satisfaction among victims of crime in England and Wales falling from 70 percent to 51 percent over the past decade.[2]

There is a widespread belief among those working in law enforcement that their roles could be improved through better use of technology: 63 percent of first responders want improved connectivity in the field;[3] 88 percent of law enforcement say that modern technology processes would help them better serve the community;[4] and 87 percent of law enforcement officers believe AI is transforming the public safety sector for the better.[5]

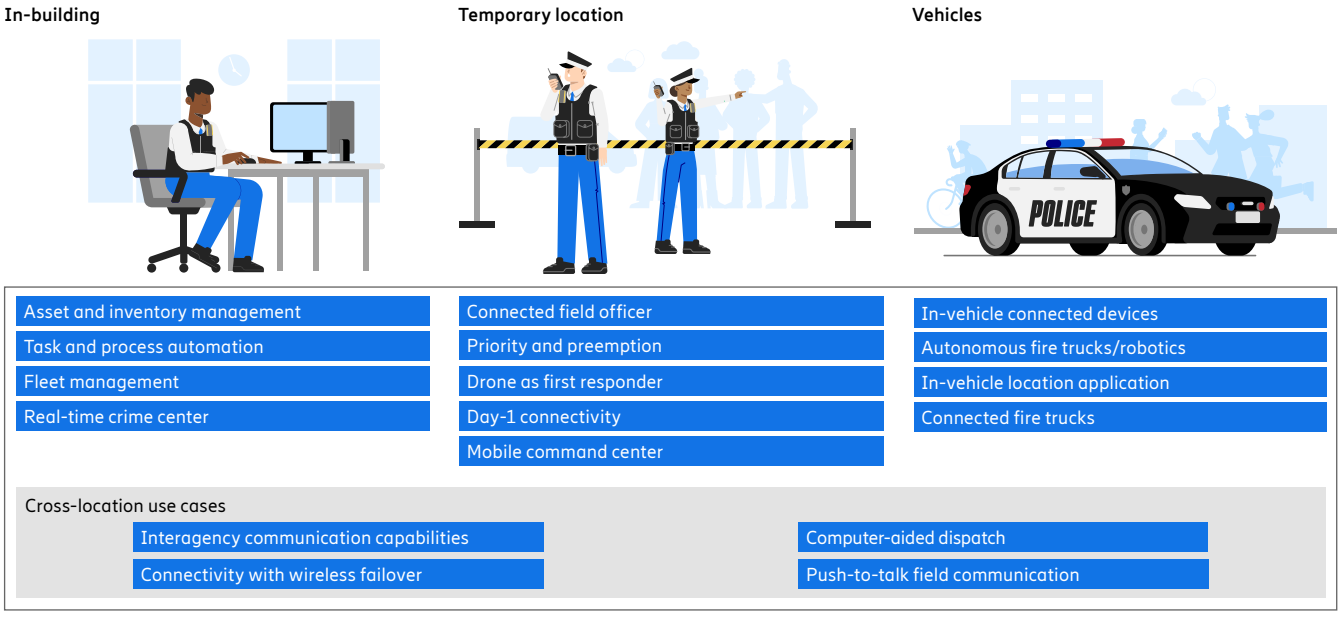
## Use cases that offer value

This report examines the findings of research conducted on behalf of Ericsson[6] into the benefits that wireless technologies bring to police and law enforcement departments. These solutions can enable officers to adapt quickly to rapidly changing conditions, accomplish more with existing resources, and ensure operational resilience amid constant change.

The focus of the research is the additional value that wireless technologies can unlock in three key places: "in-building," "temporary location," and "vehicles." It shows that more than one-fifth of the use cases identified in the research can be scaled across multiple police and law enforcement environments. These include inter-agency communication capabilities, connectivity with failover, computer-aided dispatch, and fleet management, which enable seamless data sharing and coordination between the station, the vehicle, and the incident site – all helping to ensure synchronization across every part of the police network.

Police and law enforcement agencies can unlock additional value by implementing the Ericsson Enterprise Wireless Solutions to drive agility, enhance operations, and ensure resilience. These extensive portfolios feature offerings that include Wireless WAN (WWAN), Enterprise 5G coverage and 5G SASE.

**Figure 1: Law enforcement digital transformation opportunities from Enterprise Wireless solutions**




[1] IACP, The State of Recruitment and Policing (May 2025).
[2] Office for National Statistics, Perception and experience of police and criminal justice system, England and Wales (19 August 2025).
[3] Mark43, U.S. Public safety Trends Report (2025).
[4,5] Mark43, U.S. Public Safety Trends Press Release (11 Dec, 2024).
[6] All statistics in this report are from Arthur D. Little research on behalf of Ericsson, based on a theoretical, typical law enforcement agency in the US with 170 full-time employees, of which 150 are police officers. The agency has an annual budget of USD 23 million and handles 55,000 emergency calls annually.

# Use place: In-building

In-building use places are permanent, facility-based locations, such as police stations, sub-stations, real-time crime centers, or border checkpoints. Secure and resilient operations are essential for efficiency and safety at these locations.

A single network disruption can delay responses, compromise investigations, or expose confidential information. In fact, 55 percent of technology decision makers report that connectivity issues contribute to higher operational costs.[7] It follows that network resilience directly translates to measurable savings and efficiency gains.

The research conducted on behalf of Ericsson shows that key use cases and benefits hinge on connectivity with wireless failover.

- Wireless failover is a vital business continuity function that provides backup connectivity using WWAN to ensure uninterrupted operations during primary network outages.
- A wireless failover link can reduce the number of network downtime events by 60 percent, and the duration of each event by 80 percent.[8] These improvements facilitate an estimated 416 additional responses annually that would otherwise be delayed because of system interruptions.

The research shows that a typical law enforcement agency with an annual budget of USD 23 million could benefit from an annual average of USD 386,000 in cost savings by using connectivity with wireless failover. These savings break down as 65 percent from improved IT operations and 35 percent from personnel productivity gains as a result of reduced downtime. Budgetary constraints are often a constant concern for public safety agencies. The research identifies additional potential budget savings enabled by connectivity with wireless failover, plus incremental savings from future-proofing investments and reducing incident escalations.

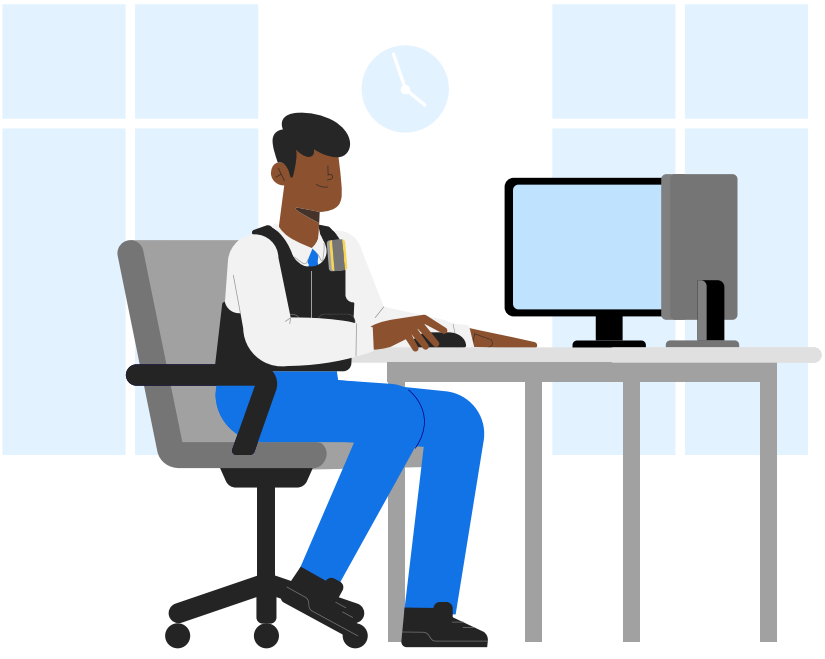
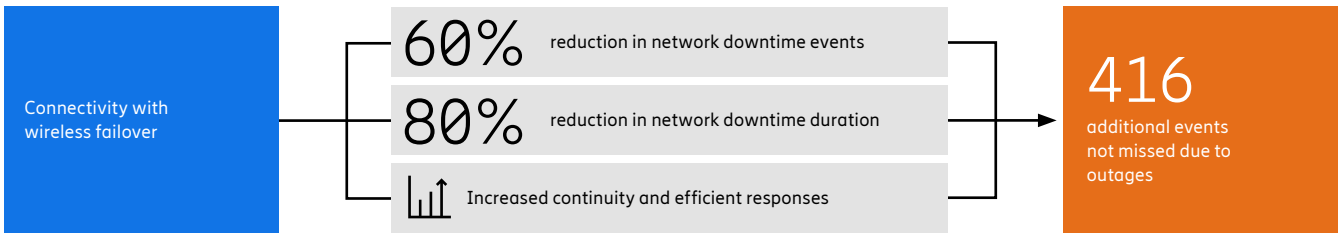


**Figure 2: Operational benefits of the wireless failover use case at in-building locations**




[7] Cradlepoint, The State of Connectivity in the United States 2024
[8] Arthur D. Little analysis. Enterprise Strategy Group Economic Validation, Ericsson, "Analyzing the economic benefits of enterprise cellular solutions in branch locations" (September 2024).
[9] The Economic Journal, Police Response Time and Injury Outcome

# Use place: Temporary locations

Temporary locations are ad-hoc or event-driven deployments, including crime scenes, traffic accidents or management, and mass event security. It's perhaps even more vital to ensure adaptability under changing conditions here than for any other use place.

Despite the vital importance of multi-team collaboration in temporary locations, achieving it is a challenge for the majority of law enforcement agencies. A total of 94 percent of agencies state that they need to improve real-time collaboration.[10]

The research conducted on behalf of Ericsson shows that key use cases and benefits for temporary locations can include:

**Priority and preemption**

- Dedicated, prioritized cellular coverage reduces network congestion during mass gatherings, ensuring uninterrupted connectivity, even during peak demand.
- With prioritized cellular access, law enforcement agencies can maintain 99.5 percent uptime.[11] This translates to 110 additional hours of uninterrupted connectivity during mass gatherings, representing around 25 percent of total time spent on these events.
- 5G continues to advance, with network slicing options available now. This capability dedicates spectrum for specific use cases, such as first-responder traffic, ensuring even greater network resiliency and performance.

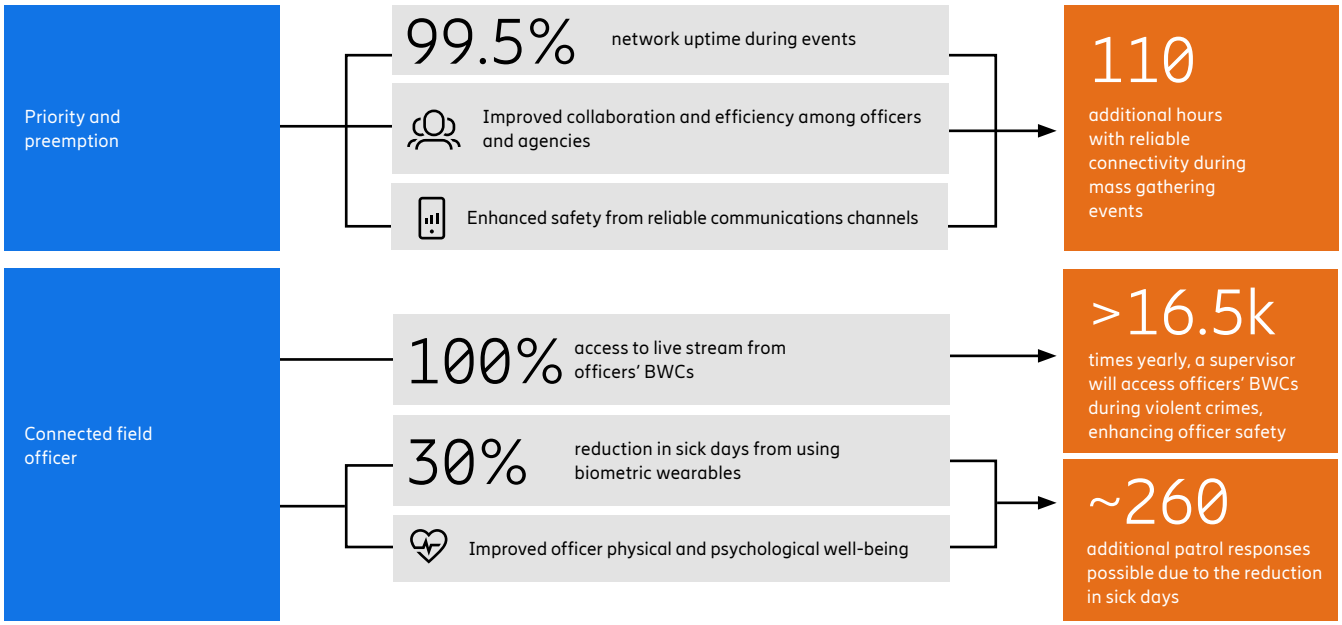
**Connected field officers**

- Frontline law enforcement personnel can be empowered by having personal mobile devices and wearable connectivity solutions that enable real-time, secure communication, situational awareness, and safety monitoring.
- Supervisors can access live body-worn camera (BWC) streams at any time, which is especially valuable during the 16,500 annual check-ins with officers dispatched to violent crimes, where the need for back-up is higher.
- Officers who use biometric wearables and engage with their health metrics can reduce their annual sick days by 30 percent,[12] leading to 360 sick days being saved across the department on an annual basis.

There are tangible financial benefits to be gained by providing priority cellular access and connecting field officers. At a typical law enforcement agency with an annual budget of USD 23 million, the research conducted for Ericsson shows that annual budget savings of at least 0.6 percent can be delivered – a value of USD 144,000. In reinvestment terms, this is the equivalent of 1.5 new full-time officers or two new police vehicles.

Additional potential budget savings identified by the research include incremental savings from decreased incident management costs, lowered legal and insurance expenses, and reduced temporary staffing and overtime.

**Figure 3: Operational benefits of the priority cellular access and connected field officer use cases at temporary locations**




[10] Police1, Improving public safety: The role of real-time communication and IoT technology (14 August 2023).
[11] Arthur D. Little analysis. Enterprise Strategy Group Economic Validation, Ericsson, "Analyzing the economic benefits of enterprise cellular solutions in branch locations" (September 2024).
[12] Vorecol, Integrating Wearable Technology into Workplace Wellness Programs (28 August 2024).

# Use place: Vehicles

Vehicles such as patrol cars, mobile command centers, and transport vehicles serve as both operational platforms and mobile offices. This makes mobile office capability essential, as 76 percent of officers spend more than half their shifts on paperwork.[13]

Unfortunately, law enforcement officers feel their work from vehicles is hindered by unreliable or low-bandwidth connectivity and fragmented connections between in-vehicle systems. A total of 86 percent believe that improved data reporting would save them time.[14]

Key use cases and benefits for vehicle use places identified in the research for Ericsson centers on in-vehicle connected devices.

- Law enforcement officers can have seamless access to critical tools and information while on the move, even in remote areas, if they are equipped with public safety vehicles with integrated, network-connected systems that automate data capture, transmission, and reporting.
- Automation of video evidence uploads, reporting, and data synchronization directly from patrol vehicles can save law enforcement agencies approximately 20,900 hours per year — the equivalent of about 7 percent of total annual working time across the department.

For a typical law enforcement agency, the use of in-vehicle connected devices to provide automation to support officers in the field with time-consuming administrative tasks can enable budget savings of at least 5 percent. With an assumed annual budget of USD 23 million, this equates to USD 938,000 saving and is the reinvestment equivalent of 10 new full-time officers or 14 new police vehicles.

Further potential budget savings that can be achieved include incremental savings from reduced errors requiring repeated work, reduced fuel cost from fewer trips, as well as reduced overtime hours.

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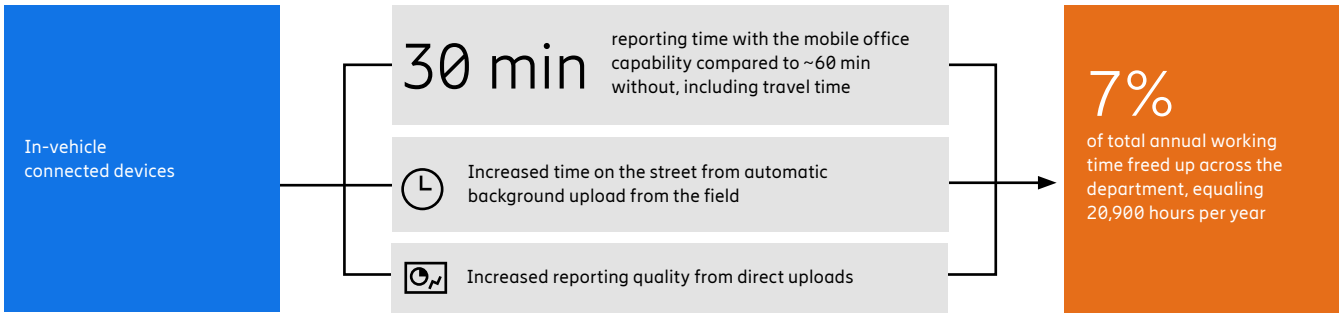
**Figure 4: Operational benefits of the connected device use case in vehicles**




[13,14] Mark43, U.S. Public Safety Trends Press Release (11 Dec, 2024)

## About Ericsson

Ericsson's high-performing, programmable networks provide connectivity for billions of people every day. For nearly 150 years, we've been pioneers in creating technology for communication. We offer mobile communication and connectivity solutions for service providers and enterprises. Together with our customers and partners, we make the digital world of tomorrow a reality.

www.ericsson.com

Ericsson
SE-164 80 Stockholm, Sweden
Telephone +46 10 719 0000
www.ericsson.com



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