Disaster recovery work demands facing challenging situations and environments — including extreme weather at times.

Now, with the new AT&T all-weather Flying COW (Cell on Wings), first responders and field technicians have a new tool on the way to help speed recovery work in the toughest of environments.

This weather-hardened version has beefed up hardware, rugged features, and enhanced capabilities equipped for a robust role in extreme environments. The drone is equipped with small cells, antennas, and is easily transported, deployed, and able to be moved quickly to accommodate rapidly changing conditions in an emergency. The “extreme-weather” drone can also withstand a tropical storm with heavy rain and wind gusts up to 50 mph. Plus, it can fly in snow and extreme temperatures ranging from below freezing to sweltering heat. It also has the capability to see through smoke, tree cover, and other obstacles.

While invaluable to our network recovery work, this new technology can also play a vital role in equipping first responders across the country.

Built by AT&T in public-private partnership with the First Responder Network Authority, FirstNet gives first responders’ communications capabilities a major boost, providing a reliable, highly secure and always-on connection. With that responsibility, we’re committed to empowering first responders with the next generation of communications tools. And our all-weather drone is one of the ways we’re delivering.

The all-weather Flying COW has the capability to hover above harsh conditions and remote terrain to keep first responders connected when other drone and deployable options aren’t viable.

Plus, with its thermal imaging capabilities, the all-weather drone can “see” through certain types of roofs to guide fire fighters around burning trusses, helping them to avoid stepping in areas that may be ready to collapse. This capability can also help search and rescue teams locate people trapped between collapsed buildings following an earthquake or lost hikers hidden from view under dense tree cover.

As hurricane season quickly approaches, we monitor the high winds, high waters, and other catastrophic events. This year we’ll be especially well prepared with this innovative new tool in our arsenal. We’ll have our new all-weather Flying COW ready to deploy when and where it’s needed.

To learn more about extreme weather drones, read this AT&T Innovation Blog post.