



FirstNet Board Approves Release of Request for Proposals

FirstNet RFP is objectives-based and incorporates public safety's need for a nationwide broadband network.

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) approved the Request for Proposals (RFP) to deploy the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) and directed management to take all necessary actions to release the RFP in early January. The Board's approval advances FirstNet's Strategic Program Roadmap and moves FirstNet a step closer to establishing a public-private partnership to build, operate, and maintain the NPSBN.

This follows their review of more than 600 public responses on the previously issued Draft RFP and 40 responses to a proposed cybersecurity strategy, a topic that had not been addressed in the Draft RFP.

Key future NPSBN procurement milestones include bidder submittals due mid-2016, proposal evaluation and award by early 2017, and the presentation of state-specific Radio Access Networks (RANs) during 2017. Given this schedule, combined with the leveraging of existing infrastructure where it makes economic and engineering sense, it would be possible to see deployment of the NPSBN initiated in late 2017.

LTE Networks for Public Safety, the Influence on Standards, and 3GPP

Traditionally, dedicated public safety systems and commercial cellular networks have been treated as two separate technology silos for providing wide-area wireless communications.

The 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), a commercial undertaking, unites seven telecommunications standards development organizations (ARIB, ATIS, CCSA, ETSI, TSDSI, TTA, TTC) and has provided their members with a stable environment in which to produce the reports and specifications that define 3GPP technologies. This standards process, along with unprecedented market demand, has enabled exponential growth in commercial cellular networks, equipment, and capabilities.

A strong standards based approach will ensure interoperability between different vendors leading to a competitive equipment market



FirstNet intends for the NPSBN to follow 3GPP standards and leverage the latest LTE innovations as they become available. Following commercial technical standards for public safety offers advantages such as

interoperability, speed to market, economies of scale/cost efficiency, enhanced competition, and transparent technology evolution roadmaps. There is growing awareness within the 3GPP project of the need and value of adding standards to address public safety features and functionality. Work is underway in Release 12 of the 3GPP LTE standards that will enhance LTE to address public safety application requirements. With clear, established 3GPP public safety standards in place, user equipment and infrastructure manufacturers, application developers, and network operators can proceed with confidence and build for public safety what they have done so well for commercial applications. Maintaining a common 3GPP standard will allow public safety to continue to benefit from future commercial advancements.

For more information regarding public safety influence on 3GPP standards, click [HERE](#).

Ask Your SPOC

Bring Your Own Device



Q: Understanding that LMR is not going away, what devices will I be able to use on the NPSBN?

RB: Ruggedized public-safety-grade devices such as smartphones, laptops, tablets, dongles, and a wide variety of specialty devices are being developed for FirstNet users.

With FirstNet's secondary-use interpretation, manufacturers will want to build both civilian and public safety devices with commercial LTE and Band 14 capabilities. This benefits both commercial and public safety users through consumer-driven economies of scale and rapid evolution of advanced communication capabilities. The availability of lower cost devices should enable individuals, such as volunteer firefighters, to purchase their own devices for operation on the NPSBN.

FirstNet recognizes that the public safety user community will demand support for personal devices on the nationwide public safety broadband network (NPSBN) and is taking steps to develop and implement an effective BYOD policy.

To read more about BYOD to the NPSBN, click [HERE](#).

If you have a question for New York's SPOC please contact Robert Barbato via email: DHSES.OIEC@dhses.ny.gov.

New York's Role

The NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (NYS DHSES) Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications (OIEC) has been designated as the State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to assist the FirstNet Authority regarding the NPSBN buildout in New York State. The OIEC has also created the Public Safety Broadband Working Group (PSBBWG), consisting of more than 50 public safety professionals from across the State, experienced in public safety communications. The PSBBWG meets periodically to discuss topics of interest and provide input to the SPOC on behalf of NY stakeholders.

Data Collection

New York submits data for Acquisition Phase

In support of the upcoming RFP release, FirstNet requested that each SPOC provide state-specific data that included coverage objectives, public safety personnel counts/distributions, and current mobile data use. The State conducted a survey to sample current use and applied Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and data to draft coverage objectives for the NPSBN buildout in New York State. New York's PSBBWG, consisting of a variety of subject matter experts, met to review and comment on these coverage objectives. The SPOC's final Data Collection report and data will be factored into the upcoming NPSBN RFP. It will also be used to inform the RAN design for New York, providing NPSBN performance and capacity benchmarks necessary to gain broad acceptance by New York's public safety community.

Public Notice Update

Key Interpretations Released

In October, FirstNet approved 62 [final interpretations](#) from the first two Public Notices. Key interpretations include: (1) general acceptance of 3GPP standards definitions and operational architecture; (2) a collection of decisions that may discourage states from building their own network (i.e., "opt out"); (3) clear intent to select a single national prime contractor for the NPSBN; (4) clarification on fees that FirstNet may collect; (5) user device compatibility requirements (that promote interoperability and competition, benefit from technology advancement, etc.); and (6) a clear statement of FirstNet's intent to leverage existing commercial providers and infrastructure. Important definitions include NPSBN

non-public safety "secondary use," and what qualifies as "rural" for coverage purposes.

Interpretations of the Third Public Notice are still pending, and when finalized will include key decisions regarding what qualifies a user or agency to use the NPSBN, as well as priority and preemption conditions and their management. The third public notice can be viewed [HERE](#).

New York's RAN Design

RAN design should be completed and ready for New York's decision in 2017

The NPSBN Radio Access Network (RAN) includes the tower sites and backhaul required to enable Band 14 wireless communication with mobile units. Upon completion of the upcoming RFP/Acquisition Process, the successful bidder will be required to provide a NY RAN design for consideration by the State under the Opt-in/Opt-out clause. This RAN is expected to be responsive to New York's coverage and capacity objectives recently provided in of the Data Collection submittal. Further, the RAN design is expected to be an iterative effort between FirstNet, the selected bidder, and New York stakeholders. The acquisition schedule suggests that the RAN design will be completed and ready for New York's decision in 2017.

If the Draft RFP's Initial/Final Operating Capability Target Timeline reflects future RFP timeline requirements accurately, RAN implementation will span five years, beginning with existing (non-Band 14) service, followed by a progressive overlay and expansion of Band 14 coverage to fill out the RAN design. This same timeline shows complementary development of Band 14-compatible devices capable of operating over the expanded radio coverage.

Get Involved

NPSTC Seeks Volunteers

The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council's (NPSTC) governing board approved the creation of several new Working Groups (WG) that will operate under the Broadband and Technology Committee. These working groups include LMR to LTE Migration, and Broadband Emerging Technologies.

LMR to LTE Migration WG. Public safety LMR systems will continue to operate for many years, as worldwide standards to support mission critical voice are finalized and as FirstNet builds the NPSBN.

Broadband Emerging Technologies WG. Significant progress with LTE technology is occurring in many areas that may affect public safety use of broadband systems. FirstNet continues to refine their vision for an NPSBN, and the 3GPP is working to advance standards to support public safety use of broadband networks and systems. This Working Group will monitor a number of specific public safety issues relating to broadband and will also review and provide input on new issues and concerns identified by the first responder community.

Sign up [HERE](#) for the NPSTC Working Groups that interest you. Work will begin in January.

Upcoming Events

What's Happening

Jan 30	FASNY - EMS Conference
Feb 2	NYPSBB Working Group Meeting
Feb 3	NYS SIEC Board Meeting
Feb 23-25	NYSEMA General Conference