



## Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network RFP UPDATE

*The RFP is objectives-based to encourage innovative solutions and seeks a single contractor to build and operate the nationwide network.*

FirstNet's NPSBN bid submission window closed on May 31. Media reports indicate that multiple bids were received although only three bidders have made public statements regarding their submitted bids: Rivada Mercury, pdvWireless, and AT&T. [Rivada Mercury's](#) team is comprised of more than two dozen companies, including Harris, Ericsson, Nokia, Fujitsu Network Communications, Black & Veatch, Intel Security, and one "major commercial carrier," in addition to rural carrier partners. According to [pdvWireless](#), they have "assembled a consortium of world-class companies to build and operate a public-safety broadband network;" however, they do not plan to name them. [AT&T](#) only recently acknowledged their bid submittal as part of a larger discussion on their spectrum portfolio plans. The good news for Public Safety is that the RFP has generated both interest and competition.

FirstNet's evaluation team will work behind "closed doors" with the aggressive goal of announcing an award by November 1. Highlights of this evaluation process include:

- Considering any and all innovative solutions utilizing emerging technologies and/or non-traditional practices or solutions
- Seeking the overall best value solution consistent with the [Statement of Objectives](#) (SOO) and the [Recommended Minimum Technical Requirements](#) (RMTR)
- Applying the following evaluation factors: Business Management, Coverage & Capacity, Products & Architecture, Value Proposition, and Past Performance

Until FirstNet makes its selection and the details of the winning bid are announced, the only known milestones are those on FirstNet's roadmap. FirstNet has acknowledged that future milestones may change based upon the selected partner's implementation plan. Assuming that FirstNet stays on schedule, making the award by November 1, and that the winning bidder adopts FirstNet's implementation roadmap, public safety stakeholders can look forward to the following milestones:

- State Plan finalized: Aug 2017
- Governor's decision: Nov 2017
- First implementation milestone (i.e., "Go Live"): Aug 2018
- Last "build phase": 2022

## PSCR Showcase Highlights Broadband Development Activity for Public Safety

Under the same legislation that created FirstNet, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) sponsor, was allocated \$300 million to fund research and development to solve critical communications technology problems. The [2016 Public Safety Broadband Stakeholder Meeting](#) held in San Diego last month presented a wide variety of research and development initiatives and accomplishments applicable to the NPSBN, including:

**Advanced Positioning and Location-Based Services (LBS)** – A method of determining a device's precise three-dimensional position in dense urban areas was described. Progress on LBS-dependent functionalities, such as off-network or direct mode communication, were also discussed. (See [PSCR Highlights](#), Pg. 2.)

## Ask Your SPOC

### NY's Influence



Q: How much say do we (NY stakeholders) have in the State Plan?

A: New York's roles in the federally implemented and FirstNet-administered NPSBN are to provide input on needs and to act as a pool of potential customers. Six months after contract signing, FirstNet and the awardee will deliver a draft state plan for the State to review. The State intends to evaluate the draft plan and identify desired revisions; however, since the contract between FirstNet and the vendor will have already been signed, revisions are unlikely to be incorporated unless they do not affect the core economics of the negotiated contract.

FirstNet CEO Mike Poth has publicly stated, "The intent of getting the draft plan to the states is so they can get a preview of what that looks like, but we want to manage expectations. It won't be blank sheets of paper. You can probably expect that 80% or 90% of what is in that draft state plan will be in the final [state plan]."

If you have a question for New York's SPOC, please contact us via email:

[DHSES.OIEC@dhses.ny.gov](mailto:DHSES.OIEC@dhses.ny.gov).

*Please note that Kevin Wisely, DHSES Dep. Commissioner for Emergency Services is the new SPOC. The former SPOC, Bob Barbato, has taken a position within the NYS Div. of Budget.*

## 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.

### Viewing the NPSBN State Plan for New York: When and How

Upon being awarded the NPSBN contract, the winning bidder will begin working with FirstNet to define Draft State Plans for every state and territory. One RFP requirement is for the winner to create a web portal on which stakeholders can view their State Plan. FirstNet envisions the use of one area of the portal to unveil future product and service offerings (coverage, devices, fees, applications and features, etc.) to public safety agencies. The portal is expected to provide more and higher quality information than a commercial provider would typically provide to its customers. A second area of the portal is expected to include sensitive information requiring controlled access to manage the proper dissemination and protection of that information. The controlled side will provide appropriate stakeholders (e.g., the Governor, SPOC, designated reviewers) with the detailed information needed to make an informed decision on whether to Opt-In or Opt-out of the State Plan.

Assuming that FirstNet awards a contract this November, per their timeline, it is expected that in the Spring of 2017, FirstNet and the winner will release Draft State Plans to each state and territory via the portal. States and territories will have an opportunity to review and discuss the State Plan within a limited timeframe. This process will be time-constrained in order to control costs and delays to network deployment. Since the terms of the NPSBN contract will have already been negotiated, the states will not be able to request cost-adding changes; however, there may be an opportunity to make net-zero cost adjustments to the State Plan. Once the review process is complete, FirstNet will present the final plans to all governors. This will start the 90-day clock for NY's Governor to evaluate New York's State Plan and make a decision on whether to Opt in or Opt out.

### Local Control: What Does This Mean for My Agency?

Local Control is one aspect of FirstNet's larger Quality, Priority, Preemption (QPP) discussion. After all, one of FirstNet's primary goals is to provide public safety with priority access over non-public safety users. But what about priority among public safety users? FirstNet and the Public Safety Advisory Committee's (PSAC) working group created to investigate and advise on these topics have defined three QPP network operational states for a given geo-area: Static, Dynamic, and Controlled. The Static state is the day-to-day "hands off" operational condition whereby PS Users will be granted use of the network and bandwidth based upon a variety of pre-configured attributes, such as their primary role and the application they are using. In the case of certain trigger conditions (e.g., immediate peril, severity of incident, busy network) the site or geo-area will enter the Dynamic state. In this state, additional situational data (e.g., AVL, GIS, device sensors) related to the emergent event(s) will influence who and what applications will have priority use. These will be input using familiar terms by authorized public safety

individuals cognizant of the active events; the network will translate this input and alter priority of use accordingly. Under extreme conditions authorized individuals with knowledge of both the incident and the network's operation will have the ability to impose additional local control over the Dynamic state; this is referred to as the Controlled state.

This three-tiered QPP approach provides several benefits to public safety. It enables administrators to pre-configure user types/roles and to prioritize use of specific applications. It enables public safety communications operators to grant greater access to higher-need incidents using simple and familiar input terms and relieves public safety communications operators from requiring detailed knowledge of the network infrastructure, yet allows them to gain additional control when an incident exceeds planned QPP parameters.

*Future Newsletter Topic: Local Control Governance (boundaries, disciplines, agencies)*

### PSCR Highlights (Contd. from Pg. 1)

**In-building Coverage Measurements** – Recognizing the impact to public safety of limited indoor coverage, the PSCR has developed cost-effective and easy-to-use coverage assessment tools designed for use by the public safety community.

**Public Safety User Interfaces** – A panel discussed the unique interface needs of public safety user devices, advocating for a holistic approach to identify requirements to inform the design and be tested accordingly.

**Mission Critical (MC) Voice** – A panel discussed MC-voice and related communications functionalities such as emergency alerting and direct mode. The speech intelligibility of vocoders

has been evaluated in various background noise environments, and the results have been incorporated into future 3GPP standards. Progress on the development of LMR-LTE gateways and integration were also discussed.

**Network Security Enhancements** – A panel discussed the need for and challenges associated with proper identification proofing of users and related planned research efforts.

**Prize Challenge Competitions** – In order to identify, accelerate, and reward innovative solutions to specific public safety technology problems, the PSCR plans to employ crowd sourcing, hackathons, and other competitions.