



FirstNet[®]

Special Notice and Draft Request for Proposals (RFP)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

FIRSTNET SAID IT WOULD COMPLETE ITS REVIEW OF ALL QUESTIONS TO ITS SPECIAL NOTICE AND DRAFT RFP DOCUMENTS BY JULY 1 AND MAKE THEM PUBLICLY AVAILABLE. DID FIRSTNET ACCOMPLISH THIS AND, IF SO, WHERE CAN I FIND THEM?

Yes, FirstNet received more than 660 questions from 52 distinct entities - 44 from industry - on the Special Notice and draft RFP documents. This total includes more than 20 questions from the May 14th Industry Day. FirstNet worked to complete the answers by July 1 to provide interested parties with sufficient time to review them and develop their comments and capabilities statements that are due July 27. FirstNet posted its responses to the questions on the [Federal Business Opportunities site](#) on June 30, 2015.

MANY OF FIRSTNET'S RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS ON THE SPECIAL NOTICE WITH DRAFT RFP DOCUMENTS REFER TO THE FUTURE, UNRELEASED RFP. WHY CAN'T FIRSTNET RESPOND TO SOME THESE ITEMS NOW?

FirstNet is actively engaged in nationwide consultation that will yield additional information for inclusion in the RFP. Additionally, the FirstNet RFP team is still accepting comments and capabilities statements through July 27, which will also inform the final document. For example, FirstNet will be reviewing submissions on the Operational Architecture as released with the draft RFP documents in order to determine the version that will be released with the RFP later this year. These inputs directly inform FirstNet's path forward and are critical in deploying a comprehensive nationwide network for public safety users.

WHO IS DRAFTING THE RFP? WHO APPROVES IT?

FirstNet has a team of dedicated professionals with backgrounds in telecommunications, public safety, and Federal acquisition drafting the RFP. This team represents a cross section of the FirstNet organization and is comprised of the same people who have been working to answer all the questions that have come in as a result of the Special Notice and draft RFP documents. The RFP itself will be reviewed extensively and approved by the Board of Directors, FirstNet management, and the Contracting Officer (CO) in coordination with the Department of the Interior's review and approval policy.

WHAT IS THE BOARD'S ROLE IN THE ACQUISITION PROCESS?

The FirstNet Board has been instrumental in supporting the overall approach to the NPSBN. In April 2015, FirstNet released the Special Notice and Draft RFP documents following the Board's concurrence. Moving forward, FirstNet's goal is to involve the Board as much as possible in the process in order to leverage the board members' expertise and significant experience, with support of the RFP team and the Contracting Officer, subject to the regulations that govern federal procurement.

WHY IS FIRSTNET ASKING POTENTIAL OFFERORS TO PROVIDE VOICE CAPABILITIES ALONG WITH BROADBAND DATA?

FirstNet is proposing to offer traditional voice based communications at launch of the network to provide public safety agencies with the same capabilities that they currently procure from wireless providers with the added benefit of priority and pre-emption for their broadband data on Band 14. Basic voice service has been an important issue during our consultations and conversations to date with the states and public safety community. Public Safety has been clear in their desire not to have to pay for a voice service, in addition to their land mobile radio and future FirstNet broadband device. Based upon this feedback, FirstNet believes that providing voice capabilities at launch will help drive public safety user adoption of the FirstNet network. In the RFP, FirstNet is asking potential offerors to address how they could potentially offer basic voice services in addition to Band 14 data services.

WHEN DOES FIRSTNET EXPECT TO OFFER MISSION CRITICAL VOICE OVER THE NETWORK?

As Mission Critical Voice (MCV) over LTE begins to be deployed internationally over the next couple of years, FirstNet will closely follow and learn from deployments in the United Kingdom, as an example, to facilitate our implementation. Based on the current pace of 3GPP developments, FirstNet could offer MCV as part of our baseline capability as early as phase 2 of the network's Initial Operating Capability (IOC), which is approximately one year after award. Of course, there are many factors at play that could affect this timeline and we will ensure the public safety community has a level of trust with the available MCV capabilities prior to deployment of it over the FirstNet network.

CAN I COMMENT ON THE RFP AFTER IT IS RELEASED IN DECEMBER?

Yes, FirstNet will accept questions as part of its acquisition process of the RFP. Amendments may be issued to the RFP after it is released, if needed.

