



# FirstNet®



## FirstNet's Special Notice with Draft RFP Documents

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

#### WHY IS FIRSTNET INITIATING AN ACQUISITION PROCESS?

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Act) requires FirstNet to issue open, transparent, and competitive requests for proposals (RFP) to build, operate, and maintain the nationwide public safety broadband network (NPSBN). To implement this mandate, FirstNet is initiating an acquisition process to promote innovation; allow for flexibility; encourage competition; and create opportunities for feedback from interested parties, including states and territories, local jurisdictions, tribal nations, federal agencies, public safety stakeholders, and market participants early in the process.

#### WHAT IS FIRSTNET SEEKING TO ACQUIRE?

Through the RFP, FirstNet will seek to work with potential offerors to acquire services and/or potentially equipment to provide Band 14 Long Term Evolution (LTE) services to public safety entities nationwide. FirstNet has identified several high-level functions it has determined necessary to provide a solution that meets FirstNet's stated mission and objectives around deploying a world class network for public safety. FirstNet is asking market participants to address the following high-level functions through the Special Notice:

- Core
- Applications ecosystem
- Radio Access Network (RAN)
- Covered Leasing Agreement (CLA)
- Deployables
- Satellite
- Devices
- Subscriber adoption
- Customer lifecycle management

#### HOW DOES THE SPECIAL NOTICE ALLOW FOR INPUT FROM THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS?

On April 24, the FirstNet Board adopted a resolution to authorize the release of a Special Notice seeking feedback on draft RFP documents. The Special Notice provides instructions for interested parties on how to ask questions of and provide comments to FirstNet on the draft RFP documents, and requests the submission of capabilities statements from the vendor community.

FirstNet seeks feedback from all interested parties on:

- FirstNet's approach to serving public safety
- Deployment and operation of the Network
- Proposed financial sustainability model
- Operational architecture
- Other draft RFP documents

This approach is consistent with FirstNet's consultation obligations under its enabling legislation and responds to stakeholder requests for opportunities to provide feedback and engage in a dialogue with FirstNet early in the process. The stakeholder feedback will help FirstNet produce the best possible RFP for deploying and operating the network.

### **IS FIRSTNET CONSIDERING AN APPROACH THAT CONTEMPLATES REGIONAL RAN PROPOSALS, IN ADDITION TO, OR IN COMBINATION WITH, A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL APPROACH?**

Yes. FirstNet is considering whether allowing a variety of potential approaches will promote innovation, flexibility, competition, and ultimately deliver the best value for public safety entities. FirstNet is considering this approach based in part on feedback to the Request for Information (RFI) and Draft Statement of Objectives (SOO) released last fall and as part of its efforts to encourage a fully competitive process aimed at maximizing innovative solutions. The RFI and the accompanying draft SOO sought feedback on multiple acquisition approaches, but there was no clear consensus on the best approach. Therefore, FirstNet is seeking feedback on the feasibility of proposals based on (i.) a nationwide RAN (to be integrated with a nationwide core), or (ii.) regional RAN(s) (to be integrated into a comprehensive nationwide network consisting of both core and RANs). In all cases, FirstNet anticipates a nationwide network of RANs integrated with a single nationwide core network. However, the best approach and/or strategy have not yet been determined. Feedback from the Special Notice will assist FirstNet in determining the best possible approach to deploy and operate the network.

### **IS THIS APPROACH CONSIDERED FINAL?**

FirstNet's proposed acquisition approach is not final. FirstNet's approach is part of an iterative process. As it evolves, FirstNet will continue to refine the RFP -- including applicable terms, conditions, evaluation criteria, and instructions to potential offerors -- with input from public safety entities, market participants, and other stakeholders. FirstNet anticipates there will be opportunities to interact with FirstNet through formalized Industry Days and potential subsequent meetings ultimately resulting in a "full" RFP. The Special Notice process, including the iterative steps described, supports FirstNet's consultation requirements under the Act and is designed to facilitate input from state, territory, local, tribal, federal, and other jurisdictions, and potential industry offerors, among others.

### **WHO SHOULD I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT INDUSTRY DAY?**

The first Industry Day event is schedule for May 14, 2015. At this event, FirstNet will provide an overview of the Special Notice and draft RFP documents, and there will be opportunities for participants to ask questions. Please contact [FirstNetIndustryDay@firstnet.gov](mailto:FirstNetIndustryDay@firstnet.gov) for questions about the Industry Day and to register for in-person attendance at the event. No registration is required for the webcast. Information about how to access the webcast will be available on [FirstNet.gov](http://FirstNet.gov) prior to the event.

## **HOW DOES FIRSTNET PLAN TO ENGAGE WITH THE STATES AND LOCAL JURISDICTIONS AND THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNITY ABOUT THE SPECIAL NOTICE AND DRAFT RFP DOCUMENTS?**

The public safety community's feedback is vital to the acquisition approach, and FirstNet will seek to encourage and maximize public safety involvement in the process. In addition to the state consultation process, FirstNet plans to conduct outreach – including webinars – to collect feedback from public safety on the Special Notice and draft RFP documents. FirstNet encourages stakeholders to provide written feedback on the Special Notice and draft RFP documents.

## **WILL FIRSTNET RELEASE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT ITS PROPOSED ACQUISITION APPROACH?**

FirstNet may release additional information about its acquisition approach, as necessary.

## **WHO IS THE CONTRACTING OFFICER FOR THE ACQUISITION OF THE NPSBN?**

The Department of Interior, Interior Business Center, Acquisition Services Directorate, in consultation with FirstNet, will conduct the acquisition and administer any resulting contract(s). The Contracting Officer for the NPSBN acquisition process is Terrie Callahan. Please direct all questions related to the acquisition to Ms. Callahan at [Terrie\\_Callahan@ibc.doi.gov](mailto:Terrie_Callahan@ibc.doi.gov), as instructed in the Special Notice posted on the Federal Business Opportunity (FBO) site ([www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)).

## **WHO CAN COMMENT OR ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SPECIAL NOTICE AND HOW LONG WILL FIRSTNET ACCEPT COMMENTS?**

FirstNet welcomes comments and questions from all interested parties. Interested parties will have 30 days to submit questions and 90 days to respond to the Special Notice with either comments or capabilities statements. Specific due dates for any submission regarding the Special Notice or the process for submitting questions, comments, and/or capabilities statements should be in accordance with the instructions contained in the Special Notice posted on FBO ([www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)). (Reference Number: D15PS00295).

