

Frequently Asked Questions

Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the 9/11 Commission recommended the establishment of a nationwide, interoperable public safety communications network to resolve communications challenges faced by emergency responders. For the past decade, public safety has worked with state and local government officials, the federal government, and members of Congress to amass support for a nationwide network. On Feb. 22, 2012, President Obama signed into law H.R.3630, the “Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012,” which includes provisions to fund and govern a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN).

As described in the *Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012*, the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network will be a dedicated, wireless, interoperable communications network that will allow the public safety community to securely and reliably gain situational awareness and share information with their counterparts in other locations and agencies. The law establishes the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) as the governance body; sets aside \$7 billion for network development, deployment, and operation; and reallocates the 700 MHz D Block to FirstNet for use by the public safety community.

The Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network, which will be run by FirstNet, an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce, will provide a secure, reliable and dedicated interoperable network for emergency responders to communicate during an emergency. Building the first nationwide public safety interoperable wireless broadband network presents an opportunity to bring commercial technologies to the public safety community, allowing them access to much needed and reliable wireless data services.

FirstNet is headed by a 15-member board, which holds the license to the entire 20 MHz of public safety broadband spectrum and comprises the Secretary of Homeland Security, Attorney General of United States, Director of Office of Management and Budget, and 12 individuals appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. These appointees include at least three individuals representing the collective interests of states, locals, tribes, and territories, and at least three individuals who have served as public safety professionals. The appointments seek to provide a balance of geographical, regional, rural and urban representation, with each board member possessing expertise in at least one of the following areas: public safety, technical, network, or financial.

FirstNet is responsible for the design, building and ongoing operation of the network. As per the law, however, FirstNet must consult with state, local and regional jurisdictions regarding a range of activities, including construction or access to the network, assignment of priority to local users, and training. The more knowledgeable we become of our own needs, the better we can guide FirstNet as it designs the network.

Imagine a public safety first responder able to communicate on a dedicated cellular-type nationwide network, accessing databases from the field and transferring data and images on demand without delay. It is anticipated that the broadband network will be built with standards-based 4G/LTE broadband technology, allowing for much faster data transmissions than legacy networks. It will enable a new host of next generation applications for public safety, such as high-definition streaming video and pictures, database queries, download building plans, and much more. FirstNet can make this a reality. FirstNet will inspire new ways of performing public safety functions that are more effective and efficient. In the future, public safety will have purpose-built applications and a new ecosystem that will provide agencies with incredible opportunities to improve service to their communities.

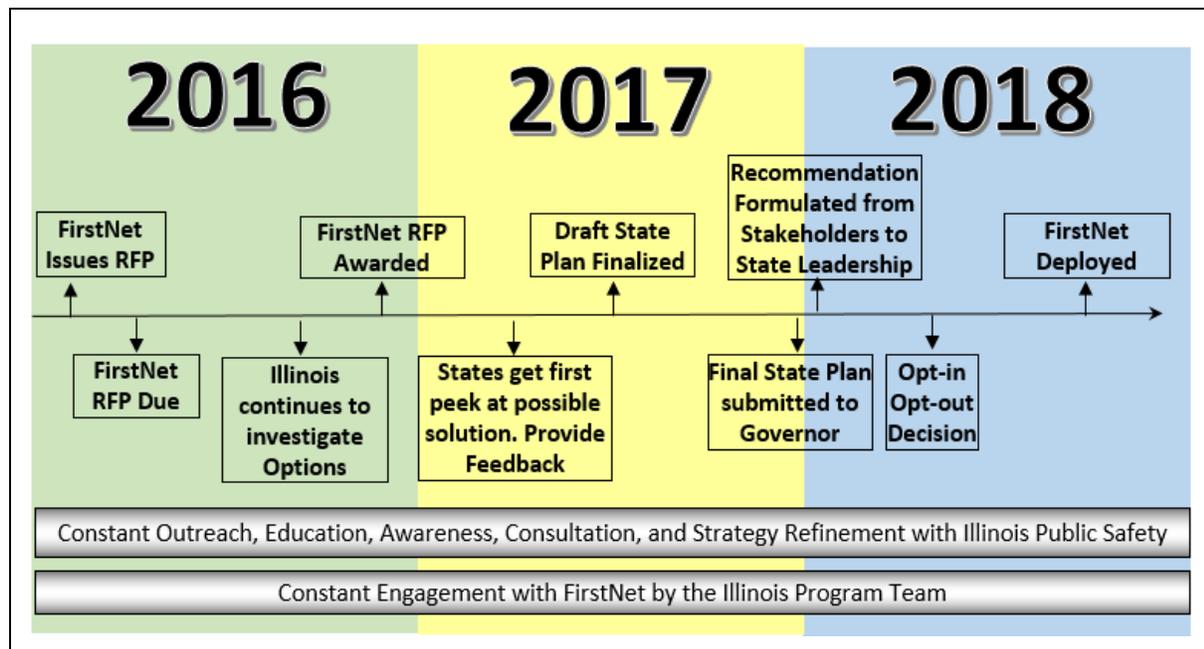
THE NPSBN AND FIRSTNET

What is the purpose of the NPSBN? As envisioned, the network would allow first responders to send and receive voice, video, and other information in real time; enable communications across agencies and jurisdictions; and improve the safety and effectiveness of operations by changing the way public safety personnel are notified about, gain information on, and respond to emergencies and natural disasters.

What is the history of the NPSBN? Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the 9/11 Commission recommended the establishment of a nationwide, interoperable public safety communications network to resolve communications challenges faced by emergency responders. For the past decade, public safety has worked with state and local government officials, the federal government, and members of Congress to amass support for a nationwide network. On Feb. 22, 2012, President Obama signed into law H.R.3630, the “Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012.” Title VI of H.R. 3630, titled “Public Safety Communications and Electromagnetic Spectrum Auctions,” includes provisions to fund and govern a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.

What is FirstNet and what will it do? FirstNet is an independent authority within the Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) that will hold the spectrum license for the NPSBN. FirstNet will be composed of 15 board members that include the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and 12 experts—to be named by the Secretary of Commerce—representing the public safety, technical, network, and financial fields. In addition to specifying network requirements and designing and managing the spectrum, FirstNet will develop a plan for network deployment for each state and work with state, local, and tribal governments to create an interoperable, nationwide network. The following individuals have been appointed to the FirstNet Board: <http://www.firstnet.gov/board>

When will the NPSBN be deployed? Will deployments vary across the country? There is no defined timeline for the deployment of and transition to the NPSBN, though it is estimated to be a decade-long process. FirstNet will provide each state with a proposed network build-out plan and state-specific funding allocation, as determined by NTIA. The below diagram is the Illinois FirstNet Team’s best guess.



What is the timeline for my state to opt-in/opt-out of the NPSBN? Within 90 days of receiving the FirstNet plan for the NPSBN (estimated to be presented in December 2017) in that state, the Governor of each state must make the decision whether to participate in the FirstNet recommended nationwide network build-out or opt-out and deploy a state-specific Radio Access Network (RAN). If the governor elects to opt-out, the state must develop and submit to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a plan within 180 days for RAN construction and operation that meets the technical requirements of and interoperates with the NPSBN. The state must also apply for spectrum through the NTIA and pay any associated user fees. If the FCC disapproves the state's plan, it must proceed with build-out under the FirstNet plan.

When will the FirstNet Request for Proposal for the nationwide buildout be issued? On Jan. 13, 2016, the national RFP was issued. It is FirstNet's intent to award the nationwide buildout to a single vendor. More information may be found at the national FirstNet website: www.firstnet.gov

Can FirstNet charge fees to use the NPSBN network? Yes. FirstNet intends to charge user fees to sustain the operations of the network.

Who is this network for? The NPSBN is for public safety users and qualified secondary users. "Public safety" includes all personnel whose sole or principle purpose is the protection of life, safety and property. Illinois is loosely including a wide array of emergency responders as eligible users of the FirstNet network. This list of emergency responders includes, but is not limited to, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, emergency management, public health, transportation/transit, public works, and government (federal and local), utilities, and dispatch operations.

What are "secondary users"? FirstNet is permitted to provide service to non-public safety users, such as public utilities, on a secondary basis through public-private partnerships. However, FirstNet is prohibited from marketing cellular service directly to consumers or competing directly with commercial cellular carriers.

Will the secondary users affect public safety's access on the NPSBN network? No. FirstNet intends to provide priority access to public safety users on the NPSBN.

TECHNOLOGY

Will current 3G and 4G devices (such as cell phones and air cards) work on the FirstNet NPSBN network? No. Your current device (cell phone or air card) through a commercial carrier does not support the frequencies FirstNet will be using. You will need to acquire a new device that works on FirstNet's network. Periphery devices such as laptops may be reused.

I've heard that 5G is being developed. Will FirstNet keep pace with changes in technology? Yes. By picking the international LTE standard, FirstNet will keep pace with commercial carriers such as Verizon and AT&T.

You mentioned that FirstNet will roll out a network nationwide. Can we use the same device in different states? Yes. The NPSBN will be a single nationwide network.

Will FirstNet build a whole new infrastructure? What do they intend on leveraging? FirstNet is required under federal statute to leverage existing infrastructure as much as possible, such as STARCOM21 sites and cellular towers. Where existing infrastructure (such as towers) does not exist or does not meet FirstNet's needs, they will have to build it.

Will access to the Internet be available? Yes, but individual users' access to the Internet will be determined by their home agency's Internet policies.

What happens when the network gets busy? FirstNet intends to have priority and preemption mechanisms in place that will make sure that high-priority data gets through the network first and as quickly as possible. All networks can and do get busy at times, but having a dedicated network with local control of priority settings means that we can minimize the effect of busy periods on our high priority data.

How will RAN (Radio Access Network) tower sites be selected? Tower sites will be selected based on a combination of design criteria like location, height, and available space, plus the cost to use a particular tower site. Whoever becomes FirstNet's network services provider will need to design their system based on these factors to provide a network that is both technically sound and financially efficient.

Can NPSBN interface to a locally owned network? Yes, FirstNet is anticipating that their network will need to connect to a multitude of agency specific networks, including CAD, Records Management, agency e-mail, and many other types of systems. However, in order to maintain the security of FirstNet for all users, there will no doubt be very stringent security requirements for any agency wishing to connect their network.

Will Devices be Proprietary? We anticipate that a wide range of devices will be available to use the network as it grows and evolves. Most devices will use common operating systems and look very much like the devices we use today. Other devices may be needed for highly specialized uses on the network, and some of those devices could be proprietary for a variety of reasons. The intent is that agencies will be able to use devices that fit their operational and financial needs.

To what minimum standards will the FirstNet network be built? It is the Illinois FirstNet Team's understanding that federal FirstNet will build a data network to the public safety standards to which we have become accustomed. Access to data is important, but if we sacrifice security, resilience, and system availability in times of high stress, then FirstNet is nothing more than a commercial carrier. Some of the standards must include:

- Coverage based on geography for public safety service, as well as population
- Solutions for serving rural and underserved areas
- Reliability that public safety can count on
- Group communications to enable effective teamwork
- Redundancy and resiliency to sustain service
- A robust and reliable portfolio of devices for different user types

Below is a further expansion of public safety grade needs.

| Public Safety Grade Features | Illinois FirstNet Team's Thinking |
|------------------------------|---|
| Coverage | The RFP process will determine how far the financial resources will take us in terms of coverage, which will be informed in part by the coverage priorities communicated to FirstNet through consultation. At a minimum, FirstNet must by law include substantial rural milestones in each phase of |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <p>network deployment. FirstNet’s preliminary modeling and analyses indicate they will be able to cover more than commercial networks, but not all of the landmass of the country. Only time will tell whether we will generate sufficient fees to cover the entire nation. Coverage can also come in different forms, such as terrestrial, deployable, satellite-based backhaul, and self-organizing networks.</p> |
| Hardening | <p>Provide a public safety broadband network infrastructure hardened to withstand environmental, cyber and other threats. The NPSBN must comply with Federal Certified Intrusion and Protection System standards, Federal Information Processing Standard 140-2, and other federal hardening and cyber security standards.</p> |
| Reliability | <p>The reason cell sites go down is usually due to lack of power or lack of connectivity with the rest of the network.</p> <p>If FirstNet uses existing cellular sites, additional power generation may be required. This would be accommodated by a diesel or natural gas generator and batteries to allow seamless uninterrupted service.</p> <p>Backhaul carries the voice, data and video traffic on the network. Backhaul provides the connections between cell sites and the core wireless broadband network. Backhaul will also connect FirstNet to the Internet and other networks such as 911 centers. Typically these connections are made via fiber optic and microwave technology. To meet the reliability needs of public safety, backhaul will be redundant wherever feasible to ensure that network traffic continues to flow during periods of extreme network demand and stress.</p> |
| Resilience | <p>Deals with recovering quickly after a network incident. FirstNet will need to put in place monitoring and response provisions to allow the network operator to be aware of outages and have the proper tools to get the system up and operational in a very timely fashion.</p> |
| System Availability | <p>Companies that manage and operate networks strive for a goal of “5-9s” system availability, meaning 99.999% of the time the network is operational, which equates to approximately five minutes of down time over a period of one year. However FirstNet has never made such a commitment, the Illinois FirstNet Team believes the successful partner with FirstNet will be held to such stringent uptime requirement.</p> |
| Site Security | <p>Physical site security for infrastructure such as cell towers, base stations, controllers and fiber optics that connect it all will be imperative. If any of these above mentioned components are affected by theft, the network will not work. Using best practices such as lighting, monitoring, fencing, and physical inspection will help minimize these risks.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Cyber-Security</p> | <p>The NPSBN must comply with Federal Certified Intrusion and Protection System standards, Federal Information Processing Standard 140-2, and other federal hardening and cyber security standards.</p> <p>To defend against today’s complex and rapidly changing security threats, FirstNet will be built with layers of security at every vulnerable point. Security will be designed into all radio access networks (RAN), the evolved packet core (EPC) network, and service platforms, as well as the devices that use the network. Firewalls will enforce stringent security policies developed in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) to meet National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements. The FirstNet design will be guided by 3GPP (3rd Generation Partnership Project) standards for encryption as well as other standards-based security measures and best practices. FirstNet also plans to work closely with federal agencies with expertise in telecommunications security design modeling</p> |
| <p>Priority</p> | <p>Provide a solution that allows priority and preemption for all NPSBN users under tiered, national, regional, and local control.</p> <p>First and foremost, the FirstNet network is being built for public safety. The purpose of the network is to provide broadband wireless communications to police officers, firefighters, paramedics and other public safety and support personnel to meet their important mission every day. We know that traditional first responders must have access to the network. During incidents where multiple agencies converge in a small area, first responders must be able to leverage access priorities.</p> <p>FirstNet anticipates that the amount of available contiguous spectrum will provide capacity for public safety’s needs. FirstNet also anticipates there may be times when there is excess capacity. FirstNet is exploring ways to make this valuable resource available to other users while preserving priority access to first responders.</p> |
| <p>Interoperability and Roaming</p> | <p>In theory, interoperability should be achieved right out of the gate with FirstNet. The network will be designed around a single standard that is open to all hardware manufacturers. Additionally, agencies may need to agree on standardized applications in order to share specific types of data (CAD, RMS, 911, Video, etc.)</p> <p>Roaming from FirstNet to the national commercial carriers is a feature that FirstNet has discussed as desirable to have. Roaming onto commercial carrier networks when FirstNet coverage is not available will be essential for FirstNet delivery of nationwide coverage, especially early on. This topic will need to be monitored closely as the RFP is issued and awarded.</p> |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <p>Lifecycle</p> | <p>Evolve the NPSBN solution, including products, services and the incorporation of 3GPP Long Term Evolution (LTE) standards as they are released throughout the life of the contract, in accordance with the TAB Report and the Act. As the 3GPP LTE standards change, FirstNet will update their network to those standards.</p> |
| <p>Rural</p> | <p>The definition of rural does not determine coverage; rather, our available resources and the consultation process will determine coverage. The definition of rural will be used to measure whether substantial rural milestones have been included in each phase of deployment as required by law. Being included in the definition of rural does not guarantee coverage, nor does being excluded from the definition deny coverage.</p> |
| <p>Local Control</p> | <p>FirstNet understands the importance of local control. We know that most incidents are local and need to be managed at the local level. How we enable local control has not yet been determined. In addition, FirstNet will be operated as a nationwide public safety broadband network with the ability for national and regional operations centers (NOC/ROC) to exercise control. These hierarchical control levels parallel many incident management plans already in use by public safety.</p> <p>FirstNet intends to make it possible to shift capacity to different parts of the network. Local control means that agencies will determine who has local priority to use the network to ensure public safety priorities are met. FirstNet is committed to enabling local control in a manner that aligns with public safety incident management protocols.</p> |

Will I need to change the software I use on my laptops if I use FirstNet? FirstNet is only providing the mechanism to transfer information over the air between users in the field and dispatch. It is our understanding that software or CAD that you use for report writing should work seamlessly over the network. There is also discussion about the need for FirstNet to develop a common interface that all software vendors can interface with, making data transfer seamless and painless. You will have to make sure your air card is compatible with FirstNet’s frequencies. Most current air cards are not FirstNet compliant.

As part of the law that created FirstNet, a portion of the spectrum known as “T-Band” (470-512 MHz) is to be returned to the FCC and sold. How does that impact Illinois? The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-961) requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to recover and auction T-Band spectrum, currently in use by public safety agencies, for commercial use by February 2021. Additionally, the Act requires the FCC to clear public safety operations from this portion of the band within two years of auction close (i.e., early 2023). The ultra-high frequency (UHF) spectrum between 470–512 megahertz (MHz)—also known as the “T-Band”—supplies a significant complement of channels to support public safety operations and regional interoperability in 11 of the largest U.S. metropolitan areas. Specific channels in this portion of T-Band spectrum are not contiguous and vary by metropolitan area and TV channels within that area. While a licensing freeze was not required by the law, the FCC placed a freeze on all new and expanded T-Band operations for public safety and industrial and business licensees. Immediately following the law’s enactment, public safety

communications experts concluded that solutions to challenges of spectrum relocation remain complex and costly for affected local and state public safety entities.

What is the difference between Land Mobile Radio (LMR) and broadband networks, in particular LTE networks? LMR is a terrestrially-based wireless communications system commonly used by emergency responders, public works companies, and the military to support voice communications. LTE is the next evolution of commercial wireless communications technology, which was developed to address the demand for data communications. LTE promises higher data transmission rates and capacity than the current 3G commercial service offerings. Unlike LMR, LTE does not currently support voice communications, provide priority access for public safety, have the mission-critical push-to-talk, multi-broadcast, or have the ability to talk device-to-device (also known as “talk around”) required by the public safety community.

What is the difference between public safety and commercial networks? Public safety voice and data networks are designed to provide emergency responders with dedicated communications channels during emergency situations. Public safety networks include higher degrees of robustness, resiliency, redundancy, and security than commonly found in commercial networks. Public safety networks are built to provide equal coverage across broad areas, handle one-to-many communications, and provide data distribution wherever the incident or event occurs. Commercial communications networks provide one-to-one communications services to private consumers and are designed to generate the largest possible economic return for the commercial provider.

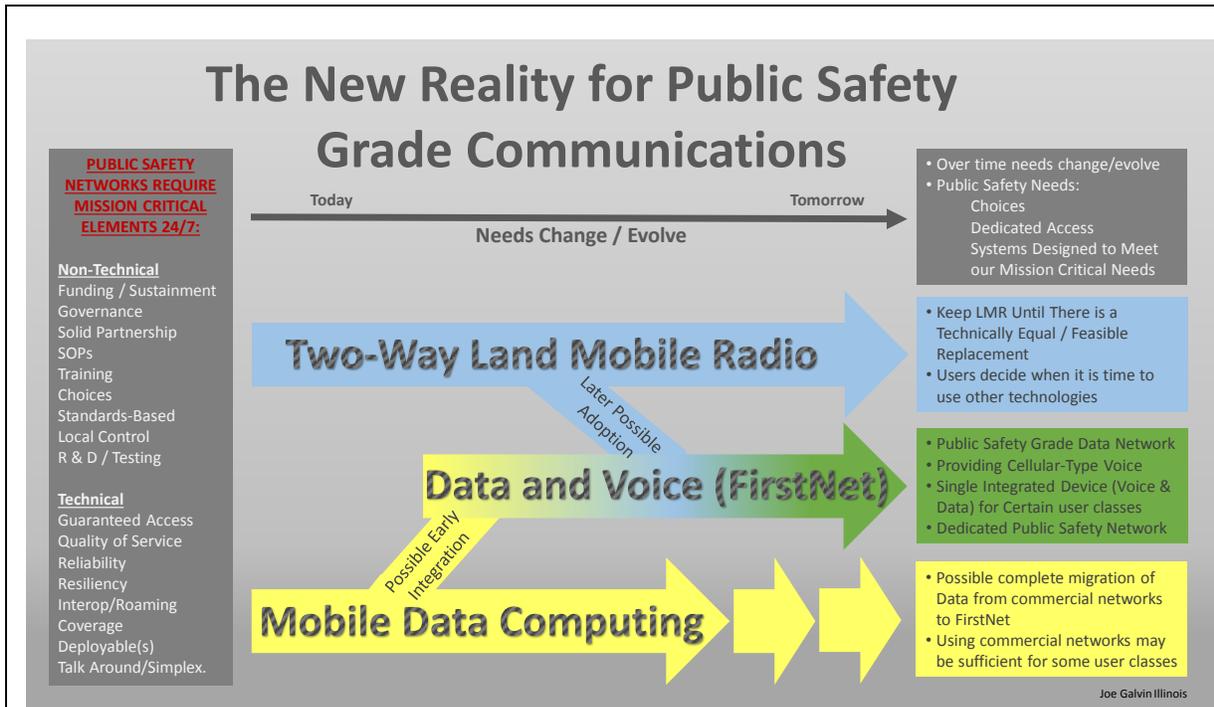
While current commercial solutions are used to augment public safety networks by providing non-mission critical services, many commercial data solutions are not interoperable with public safety systems, have limited or constrained bandwidth availability, are not built to public safety standards, do not provide priority access, and may become inaccessible during a significant emergency event.

Will broadband replace Land Mobile Radio (LMR)? For the foreseeable future, broadband will supplement, but not replace LMR. At this time broadband does not adequately support voice communications; therefore, it will be necessary to continue to invest in LMR as an integral part of first responder communications. While the future use of broadband technology will provide information electronically and minimize voice traffic over LMR, the way in which LMR systems may augment the future network can only be determined once the architecture is defined; technical standards are drafted and accepted; devices are built, tested, and certified; and the public safety community begins the migration to these new tools.

When the FirstNet network is initially deployed, it will provide mission-critical, high-speed data services to supplement the voice capabilities of today’s LMR networks. FirstNet users will be able to send and receive data, video, images, and text, as well as use voice applications. They will communicate over the network and benefit from the ability to share applications.

In time, FirstNet plans to offer Voice over LTE (VoLTE). VoLTE can be used for daily public safety telephone communication. FirstNet can’t predict the arrival of mission critical voice in part because the standards are still under development. Standards will determine the functionality and performance requirements for mission critical voice. FirstNet is actively involved in the standards-setting process. The industry at large is working to accelerate the development of this new worldwide standard. Even after a standard is released, there are years of work required before this will be considered “public safety grade.”

The below diagram, created by the Illinois FirstNet team, is an illustration on how public safety may be looking at FirstNet in regards to the future of existing data networks and Land Mobile Radios.



FUNDING

What are the expected monthly usage costs? Unknown at this time. However, FirstNet has stated in public meetings that the cost to the end user will be competitive with commercial carriers. In our estimation the cost must be the same or lower than current service for FirstNet to be considered a viable replacement.

FirstNet plans to deliver valuable applications and services as well as a network tailored to the requirements of the public safety community. FirstNet acknowledges that public safety-grade reliability, security and resiliency come with a price. FirstNet plans to invest in building the first nationwide network with this level of performance. FirstNet also intends to meet its mandate to find a way to better service unserved and underserved areas. FirstNet will make every effort to keep user costs down. FirstNet plans to leverage its buying power as a nationwide network serving millions of public safety users. In addition, FirstNet will enable multiple jurisdictions to cost-effectively share access to applications and common databases, such as motor vehicle and criminal background information.

The legislation that established FirstNet stipulated that FirstNet would be self-sustaining and that any fees collected by FirstNet shall not exceed the amount necessary to recoup expenses. FirstNet is working to establish a pricing model that will attract users and ensure the network is self-sustaining. FirstNet will strive to price its services in a manner that enables public safety users to benefit fully from everything the network has to offer.

How much will building the network cost agencies? Most likely nothing. FirstNet's mission in federal statute is to build the network and offer service to agencies. While it is possible agencies may be allowed to make additional investments on their own, FirstNet's basic business model is to build the network and charge fees for use like a cellular carrier.

How will the network be funded? The Public Safety Trust Fund (PSTF) will be established to collect revenue from spectrum auctions. Through incentive auctions, the FCC will raise funds for network development, deployment, and management that will be transferred to the PSTF and then allocated by FirstNet. States will also be asked to contribute resources to build out the network.

Who owns the network once it is built? Of course the simplest answer will be the taxpayers, since the network is built with \$7B of taxpayer money. However, the FirstNet organization (which is an independent authority inside the U.S. Department of Commerce), along with their private sector partners, will be responsible for the maintenance, management, and operation of the nationwide network. The network could be owned by a private sector entity.

Will funding of the network raise taxes in my state? Per the legislation, funding for the network will be generated through spectrum auctions through Fiscal Year 2022, not tax revenue. Sustainment of the network is envisioned to come from user fees and potential leases of network assets to authorized secondary users.

Is grant funding available to develop a network in my state? Will this funding pay for planning only, or also for equipment or services? While grant programs and funding have been identified, currently there is no structure to apply for and receive funding. In the future, NTIA will provide guidance regarding how to apply for funds from the State and Local Implementation Grant Program, define the scope of eligible grant activities, and prioritize grants for activities that ensure both rural and urban coverage.

How much will the network cost to develop, deploy, and maintain? What percentage of this cost will states and local areas be responsible for? At this time, it is unknown how much it will cost to develop, deploy, and maintain the NPSBN, and thus there is no specific information available to indicate what percentages may be attributable to state or local entities.

Should I continue to spend money on public safety communications systems? Public safety's use of LMR systems will continue for the foreseeable future as there is no defined timeframe when LTE broadband technology may provide the same level of mission critical voice services enjoyed today. Therefore, it will be necessary to continue investments for existing and new LMR voice systems, while simultaneously allocating new funding if you are interested in participating in FirstNet.

Can my state generate revenue from the NPSBN if we opt-out? No, if a state chooses to opt-out they are only opting-out of the provision and construction of the RAN portion of the envisioned network. Pub. L. No. 112-96 specifies that if a state chooses to opt-out and then satisfies all of the conditions that provide grant funding from FirstNet to build the RAN, any monies or fees collected must be used to support the constructed nationwide network.

IN ILLINOIS

Do I have to use FirstNet? No. Subscribing to FirstNet services is voluntary. There is no federal or state mandate that would require you to adopt FirstNet's service. We expect to have FirstNet service on a state or federal contract to make it easy for emergency responders to procure.

Who is responsible for coordinating all of the state and local assets and working with the FirstNet Board? Each state is required to designate a single state officer that will be the point of contact for consultations with FirstNet. The Illinois governor has chosen the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) as the designee to prepare all statutory deliverables to the federal government as well as be the focal point for planning and education in Illinois. In turn IEMA has created a 120-person multi-discipline, multi-jurisdictional membership forum to review and contemplate usage and deployment of FirstNet.

This group's main charge is to listen to Illinois emergency responders as a whole and distill those needs succinctly to FirstNet. Learn more about Illinois FirstNet by visiting our website www.firstnet.illinois.gov

Should we integrate into a single device for access to voice and data? That is a question only you can answer for yourself, based on your operational needs. Benefits of having an integrated single device for voice and data would be cost savings with a single device and no need to haul around multiple devices. A single device will work if you only need access to data and cellular-up voice calls are sufficient. The drawback, of course, is that if your one device fails, you've lost communications.

The benefits of having multiple devices would include redundancy and a device that focuses on a specific mission (may include more robust capability). For example, a fire fighter coming to a scene could use a smartphone on FirstNet to transmit images of a fire to dispatch when requesting additional assistance; however, that same fire fighter may not be comfortable running into a burning building with a device that is not designed for emergency communications and hostile environments.

What will FirstNet offer Illinois public safety?

1. Wide geographic coverage on a resilient and redundant network with the capacity to guarantee access during events that stress traditional broadband networks today.
2. A blend between public and private networks – this allows switching to a network that will provide the access your agency needs in a given situation.
3. Mobile broadband enables high speed wireless connections vital for multimedia applications and services. These solutions need to meet critical public safety requirements for tailored and hardened capabilities that deliver the control, priority, security, and performance demanded by first responders.
4. Interoperability solutions connect critical resources across agencies and jurisdictions, link private and public non-mission critical networks, and bridge two-way radio systems with emerging mobile broadband networks.
5. The Integrated command concept enables common, intuitive user experiences and meaningful interactions across command-center applications, marrying radio consoles with computer-aided dispatch systems that converge voice, data, records and video.
6. Video security offers intelligent solutions that analyze and correlate video with voice and data and share information optimally between the command center and the field to provide a new level of situational awareness without information overload.
7. Workforce mobility brings enterprise type efficiencies to public safety responders with streamlined applications and processes to support day-to-day operations as well as incident and disaster management.
8. Improved redundancy, reliability, capacity, and performance for public safety.
9. Enables public safety to evolve with commercial technology, applications, and device improvements, keeping the devices and network evergreen.
10. Reaching Agreement- FirstNet will work with public safety, commercial wireless carriers and vendors to determine precise needs and how systems should be configured to meet those needs.
11. Ensures that broadband wireless communications for public safety will be fully interoperable across all geographies and jurisdictions.
12. Ensures nationwide coverage.
13. Ensures that public safety will have handsets available at consumer electronic prices.

What do I need to do to promote the development and deployment of the NPSBN? The network build-out will require continued education and a high level of commitment at all levels of government and across public safety disciplines to understand network requirements and identify existing resources and assets. It will also be necessary to develop and maintain partnerships with a variety of stakeholder agencies and organizations, and design effective policy and governance structures. Stakeholders must engage in planning and coordination at the nationwide, statewide, regional, and tactical levels; foster partnerships between disciplines and jurisdictions; and develop policies and plans for new and emerging emergency communications technologies.

Illinois has many rural areas; how will FirstNet cover all of Illinois? At a minimum, FirstNet must by law include substantial rural milestones in each phase of network deployment. FirstNet's preliminary modeling and analyses indicate they will be able to cover more than commercial networks, but not all of the landmass of the country.

Will there be an Illinois FirstNet Office for support, questions? Nothing has been decided to date. The Illinois FirstNet team is encouraging the development of an Illinois Project Office to manage the needs for all public safety in Illinois. This project office could be used to adjust bandwidth when and where needed. The project office will also act as a customer service representative and a single point of contact for our emergency responders throughout the state.

I hear Illinois is authoring an RFI/RFP for a possible Opt-Out; what is that about? Illinois Department of Central Management Services has issued an RFI contemplating opting out and building our own FirstNet network. This does not mean we are considering opting out and building our own. No decisions have been made to date, and Illinois remains neutral on the opt-in/opt-out decision. The purpose is to have something we can compare against the federal FirstNet plan that will be presented to Illinois in 2017.

What is Illinois doing to prepare? The Illinois FirstNet team's primary focus will be to create an open dialogue and connection with state and local emergency responders to foster an environment for them to learn more about FirstNet. FirstNet will provide public safety first responders a dedicated cellular-type nationwide data network. The Illinois FirstNet team is focused on completing all statutory requirements, engaging and educating our emergency responders so they better understand what FirstNet will deliver, holding sessions with our public safety stakeholders so we can better convey their unique needs to FirstNet, and ultimately making a recommendation to state leadership about whether Illinois should opt in and allow FirstNet to build this network in Illinois or opt out, with Illinois constructing its own network linking to the federal program. Keep in mind: no decisions have been made, and no recommendations have been written. Today this FirstNet network only exists in concept and Illinois has a blank canvas...now is our opportunity to provide critical input from our public safety practitioners.

Illinois can best prepare itself by following these priorities:

- **Information Sharing:** Keeping people/agencies informed of activity around FirstNet
- **Establishing Governance:** Develop a new or enhance an existing governance structure to start making decisions with a multi-agency, multi-discipline membership
- **Create a Plan:** Develop a comprehensive written Broadband Plan for Illinois. The plan can be located [here](#).
- **Keep an Open Mind:** Until we know what our options will be, being flexible and open to alternatives is paramount.