

FirstNet OKs second public notice focused on roles, responsibilities of group, states

Fierce Mobile Government By Dibya Sarkar

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The independent government board charged with building a nationwide, wireless communications network for first responders recently approved the release of a second public notice seeking feedback on various matters from technical issues related to equipment to funding considerations.

The First Responder Network Authority, known as FirstNet, is currently meeting with various state, local, tribal and other organizations as it develops plans for the \$7 billion interoperable public safety system.

The 15-member FirstNet board is seeking public comment on several matters related to the the responsibilities between the group and states and territories in deploying and operating parts of the network.

"We have been laser-focused on finalizing our approach to the request for proposals process that will form the basis of our nationwide network deployment," Sue Swenson, who chairs the 15-member FirstNet board, said in a March 9 [release](#) .

"Consultation on the complex issues in this second notice, combined with upcoming opportunities to receive feedback on the request for proposals itself and our ongoing state and local consultations nationwide, create fundamental building blocks for our approach," she added.

The second notice is looking for comment on several key provisions, including:

- Technical requirements for equipment that will be used on the network; they include open standards for connectivity and device competition.
- Policies designed to maintain interoperability in states and territories that take responsibility for constructing and operating a radio access network, or RAN.

- A governor's decision in assuming oversight of a RAN and other roles and responsibilities of states and FirstNet.
- Customer, operational and funding factors that play into a state's control of a RAN.

Deadline for comment will be 30 days from the day that the notice is published in the *Federal Register* .

The public safety network would address a decades-long problem that has plagued first responders – their inability to communicate with one another due to stand-alone systems and devices that are incompatible across many jurisdictions. The money has been raised through recent auctions of spectrum by the federal government.

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