State Plan Review Meeting Q&A

The following are questions for AT&T and/or FirstNet from attendees during the State Plan Review Meeting in Palo Alto on July 6, 2017.

Coverage

1. What’s the specs for coverage? Is it symmetrical?
   
   Cal OES: AT&T/Scott Andrews will answer in presentation.

2. Are the 6,000 in-building distributed antennas systems (DAS) for California?
   
   AT&T: No, nationwide.

3. Can you talk about adding sites? Our county doesn’t like to add sites (Santa Cruz County).
   
   AT&T: Any advocacy you can provide is helpful. Barbara Winn works these issues.

4. Do these maps just display macro coverage?
   
   AT&T: I don’t believe this includes in-building, [such as DAS]. So, yes, just macro coverage.

5. Is there another higher level of granularity of these maps that we can compare with our sites?
   
   AT&T: Our radio access network (RAN) engineers have those but they’re not publically available. However, we can work with you one-on-one. Please let us know where you need coverage.

6. Are you talking about putting up sites just for FirstNet, or are they shared with commercial customers?
   
   AT&T: They’re shared.

7. What’s needed for satellite coverage? Is it an Inmarsat brick that sets up a Wi-Fi hotspot?
   
   AT&T: Yes, it’s similar.

8. Any contemplation of using other carriers’ Wi-Fi? For example, Verizon?
   
   AT&T: I haven’t heard any conversations on that so far.

9. Does AT&T have a roadmap for DAS coverage? Is there a process for us to influence where DAS are placed?
   
   AT&T: We need to have these conversations. The small cells are coming out and that will be looked at together with DAS.

Network Performance

10. I heard you say that, to start, this is a data network. Will this be an LMR [i.e., voice network] in the future?

   AT&T: It’s meant to be a data network. However, future standards are there for mission critical voice. It will be up to agencies as to when they feel it’s appropriate to use voice on the FirstNet network.
11. A volunteer firefighter can have Primary User access, correct?

   **AT&T:** Yes. This is the way it’s been explained to us.

12. As the rest of network technology progresses, how will this network be kept up to date?

   **AT&T:** This is one of the beauties of this network. It will evolve at the same rate as the commercial network, because it’s a single network.

13. Are there further definitions for how priority will be handled for applications?

   **AT&T:** There is a hierarchy of priority levels. There can be priorities by user level as well as by application, such as video.

   **Cal OES:** Cal OES works closely with AT&T regarding the 9-1-1 offices today. That same kind of dedication can be applied to FirstNet where we can help agencies working with AT&T should they run into problems. We see this as a role Cal OES can play in the future. We’re interested in your feedback as to how this should work.

   **Barry Fraser:** I understand there will be a role for the State, but I believe there will also be local or regional agency decisions; for agencies that work side-by-side as well as with overlapping jurisdictions.

14. Where is security? Is it in the client? Or can you only get FirstNet through your [frequency] band? Can you unload the network onto other spectrum if you need to get out?

   **AT&T:** You’re probably using NetMotion or similar today. This will be the same. It doesn’t change much from what you get today, it’s just that you get priority and preemption, too.

15. Does your Quality of Service, Priority, and Preemption (QPP) characteristics follow you as you move to distributed antenna systems (DAS) or Wi-Fi access?

   **AT&T:** I’m told they’re working on DAS, but I don’t know about Wi-Fi.

16. How many FirstNet deployables will be located in California?

   **AT&T:** We’re still working on that. We have hundreds of normal sites across the state that we use.

17. Are there requirements available if an agency wants to add FirstNet to an existing vehicle?

   **AT&T:** Not yet. We are working on that.

**Cost and Services**

18. If the State decides to opt out, what needs to occur? Is [the network] mandated to be built?

   **Cal OES:** There’s a 180-day period to provide an alternative plan if opting out. FirstNet has to allocate spectrum to the State, and there are many other steps. It’s an extensive and time consuming process.

   **FirstNet:** The opt-in/out question really gets down to who pays to build and to operate the state radio access network (RAN) [i.e., FirstNet or the State].

19. Is the expectation that you will have direct access to California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) through FirstNet and not go through your agency’s approved interface to the system?

   **Cal OES:** No. Scott Andrews will provide more detail during his presentation.
20. If at a local level, FirstNet services are inferior to what I currently have, then your statewide statistics will be skewed. So, do you want my feedback regarding both the state opt-in/out decision as well as agency FirstNet subscription?
   
   Cal OES: Yes.

21. Will AT&T be using its current staff to support FirstNet?
   
   AT&T: AT&T will be setting up dedicated customer support centers. As of today, AT&T is using current engineers but expects to gain 10,000 employees as a result of FirstNet.

22. Do you see Band 14 becoming just a part of the standard chipset that comes out on all phones in the future?
   
   AT&T: Yes.

23. Can you run non-FirstNet apps? Are these locked phones?
   
   AT&T: On the cellular side, you need to be an AT&T subscriber.

24. Can I use FirstNet services, say via Wi-Fi, on a Verizon phone?
   
   AT&T: We’ll need to take that question back.

25. How do you provide certification of an agency mobile virtual private networking (mVPN) application?
   
   AT&T: We’ll have to get back to you on those details, but I foresee you’ll be able to access all the apps you access today.
   
   FirstNet: It’s envisioned that there will be access to public safety applications regardless of which carrier you’re on.

26. Will the opt-in/out decision affect AT&T being the service provider?
   
   FirstNet: If a state opts out, its network will still need to connect to and interoperate with the AT&T public safety network core.

27. Will there be FirstNet system managers hired by agencies, or is this “another duty as assigned” for agencies?
   
   AT&T: It will be up to the agency. There will be permanent priorities assigned at the start for users. We think it will be “another duty as assigned” for temporary priority assignments. It is planned to be a simple interface.
   
   FirstNet: Most of this is all automatic, all the time.

28. How do the individual agencies negotiate below rack rates?
   
   AT&T: It will start with the major contracts mentioned, then, depending on the agency, there could be further negotiations. AT&T is building up a sales force to do this.

29. Do you have a pool situation for devices that can be added on an as-needed basis?
   
   AT&T: We are working on this.

30. Are you trying to turn this into a seat license sort of contract?
   
   AT&T: Yes. We’re motivated to drive users on to this network, otherwise, we’re penalized.
Cal OES: We can’t begin CALNET conversations until after the Governor’s opt-in decision. We’re already talking with them, though. Also, we may look at a more public-safety-centric contracting option that includes 9-1-1, since CALNET is more information technology (IT) focused.

31. Do you foresee an AT&T certified-for-use process for trunk mounted modems and similar devices?
   AT&T: Yes. That is absolutely the plan. You can purchase through us or buy your own.

32. If I choose to move my organization to push-to-talk (PTT) over FirstNet, how would that work?
   AT&T: We treat it like data.

33. Assume the Governor opts in, then starting next year, we can replace our current devices if we choose to; but can we even replace our mission critical LMR eventually as well?
   AT&T: Yes, but it’s a decision you need to make.
   FirstNet: [Use the] right tool for the right job. In the future, you’ll see LMR radios with LTE capability, with the ability to switch between. I see this as a great thing for admin people, so they can use their phone instead of a dedicated radio.

34. Speak about the synergies between NG911 and FirstNet. So far I’ve seen the federal funding going to FirstNet. I’m concerned with the gaps.
   Budge: We’re at a decision point for 9-1-1, the system is aging and well past end-of-life. We want to keep Cal OES process the same for 9-1-1 to help you purchase your equipment and services. FirstNet gets your 9-1-1 data out to the field. I’d like to see FirstNet as a back-up to NG9-1-1 Internet Protocol (IP) delivery in case a backhaul digs up your wired connection.