

## Questions & Answers

### Bidders' Conference

<b>RFP Information:</b>	
RFP Name	Commonwealth Public Safety Broadband Network (CPSBN)
RFP Number	6100043131

#	Question	Answer
1	Why does the RFP ask for coverage maps for 10 Mbps downlinks and 1 Mbps uplinks, when FirstNet's RFP asked for 768 Kbps downlinks and 256 Kbps uplinks?	Pennsylvania first responders were promised that the NPSBN would be a broadband network and were surveyed where they would like to have coverage for using broadband wireless. 10 Mbps is broadband; 768 Kbps is not. Because providing maps of 10 Mbps coverage can be problematic for commercial companies, the RFP will be updated. Coverage maps for 768 Kbps will be required for each program phase, as well as coverage percentages for both 768 Kbps and 10 Mbps for every county for each program phase, as well as a statewide coverage map for 10 Mbps at FOC. This last map will be kept confidential.
2	Will the procurement process include multiple steps, with bidders deselected at each step?	The procurement process will proceed as specified on the website and in the RFP, directly culminating in one bidder being selected, if at least one passes all the tests. Please note for clarity: in the RFP, Section II-5.A, the phrase "total score" means "raw technical score". Also, the timeline for the procurement process is constrained by the timelines established by the FCC and NTIA.
3	Will the PA process for assessing opt-out proposals work from the ground up, with first responder requirements, or from the top down, with high-level objectives defined by FirstNet?	The PA process for assessing opt-out proposals is purposely modeled after FirstNet's objectives approach but will be informed by our understanding of first responder requirements, of which some can be gleaned from the public website FirstNet provides, summarizing state inputs to their RFP process.
4	Should assets owned by the Commonwealth be considered available for use, and will a list of tower assets be provided?	A variety of assets owned by the Commonwealth can be considered available for use, through existing leasing programs not part of this procurement. Lists of assets will not be provided.
5	For teaming with small businesses and women-owned or minority-owned businesses, do those businesses need to be based in Pennsylvania?	They do not need to be based in Pennsylvania, but they do need to be registered with Pennsylvania and certified by the Department of General Services.
6	Will additional technical requirements be issued?	The objectives-based RFP will not issue additional technical requirements. Our coverage requirements for broadband data do refine those in FirstNet's RFP. Pennsylvania is looking for bidders to demonstrate their expertise in understanding what is needed by first responders and in proposing a system and business model that meet those needs.

7	What clarification can the Commonwealth provide on making proposals concise?	The Commonwealth expects best effort on the part of bidders, but does not have specific preferences on how proposals can be made concise.
8	Can the NDA be changed to accommodate difficulties some companies have with the term, signature penalties, and carve outs for regulators?	The NDA was established by the Commonwealth and is not allowed to be changed.
9	Will bidders have access to any specific user or system requirements established during the surveying of first responders?	The Commonwealth did survey first responders, as part of an NTIA grant. Some of the information learned is available in the FirstNet reading room, but any further public or private sharing is constrained by NTIA's insistence that efforts supported by the grant not be used for informing any state's efforts to consider an opt-out option.
10	What restrictions are there in teaming?	Companies for teaming must be disclosed and must not be barred from doing business in the Commonwealth. Key personnel must be recognized.
11	Could Pennsylvania make any fiber assets available for use in backhaul design?	Any assets owned by the Commonwealth available for use will be through existing leasing programs not part of this procurement. Lists of fiber assets will not be provided.
12	Will the Commonwealth facilitate network buildout at the local level by assisting the winning bidder in obtaining permits, etc.?	Bidders should not expect the Commonwealth to assist in that fashion. The Commonwealth will have a relationship defined in its contract with the winning bidder. But this will not a public-private partnership, which would require legislative authority.
13	Can the Commonwealth provide a list of names of those present at the Bidders' Conference?	No. Commonwealth employees associated with this procurement signed confidentiality agreements, which prohibits sharing information about the procurement.
14	Re: II-1.B: The RFP states that for a proposal to be eligible for selection, it must: <i>"B. Be properly signed by the Offeror (see Part I, Section I-12B)."</i> The reference provided does not exist in the RFP, please clarify.	The RFP has been updated with the correct reference.
15	Re: III-3: Acknowledging receipt of Addendum #2, we are seeking further clarification on which criteria will actually be used to evaluate an Offeror's response? On page 20 of the RFP in the Section III-3 Objectives, the Commonwealth stipulates that ... <i>"Objectives established for the CPSBN parallel those established by FirstNet for the NPSBN. The Commonwealth shares these objectives in order to develop a RAN that will be fully compliant with the objectives of FirstNet and that will provide seamless interoperability now and in the future with the NPSBN. The Offeror shall be responsible for meeting these objectives as tailored for Pennsylvania."</i>	The objectives and goals of FirstNet and Pennsylvania are the same: a broadband data network for first responders. The RFP has been updated to allow comparison with the AT&T plan and to allow bidders to demonstrate with clarity what broadband coverage they are proposing for Pennsylvania.

	<p>And on Page 27 of the RFP, the Commonwealth references the FirstNet RFP J-8 IOC/FOC criteria and specifically that...</p> <p><i>“Persistent coverage that satisfies the coverage requirements of the RFP are used in establishing IOC milestones and Final Operational Capability (FOC) milestones. Temporary coverage provided by deployable radio base station systems may be used to complement persistent coverage, but does not count in satisfaction of IOC/FOC coverage deployment percentage goals.”</i></p> <p>Further down on Page 27 the Commonwealth states:</p> <p><i>“For the purposes of this RFP, it is the intent of the Commonwealth to comply with the IOC/FOC goals of FirstNet to the extent practical.”</i></p> <p>Do these statements confirm, along with a mention in the RFP pertaining to the definition of <i>“coverage deployment goals”</i> that an Offeror’s coverage will be evaluated by the FirstNet UL and DL criteria and the submission of <i>“coverage and capacity mapping at the level of actual signal strength necessary for broadband use, 10Mbps downlinks and 1Mbps uplinks at FOC”</i> is for informational purposes only?</p> <p>Or alternatively, does the Commonwealth, then, have Coverage and Capacity goals that exceed FirstNet’s?</p>	
16	<p>Re: III-2.E: The RFP asks Offerors to</p> <p><i>“Demonstrate corporate financial stability, and that of key team members, by providing audited financial statements for the last five fiscal years. If the firm has a bond rating, the source and documentation of that rating shall be supplied. If an Offeror relies on an outside lender or equity partner for funds, that source shall be identified and financial data shall be provided that demonstrates the capability to fund the CPSBN.”</i></p> <p>In all other State RFPs that have been issued to date (New Hampshire, Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Wisconsin, Michigan, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Missouri), the requirement has been to provide audited financial statements for the last three fiscal years. We request the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania reduce the requirement from the last five fiscal years to the last three fiscal years.</p>	The RFP has been updated to allow for three years of data.
17	<p>Re: III-3.B: The RFP asks Offerors to</p> <p><i>“... demonstrate financial stability, and that of its key suppliers/operating team, through the provision of audited</i></p>	The RFP has been updated to allow for three years of data.

<p><i>financial statements for the last five fiscal years. If the firm has a bond rating, the source and documentation of that rating shall be supplied.</i></p> <p><i>If an offeror relies on an outside lender or equity partner for funds, that source shall be identified and audited financial statements for the last five fiscal years shall be provided that demonstrates the capability to fund the CPSBN.”</i></p> <p>In all other State RFPs that have been issued to date (New Hampshire, Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Wisconsin, Michigan, Rhode Island, Oklahoma, Missouri), the requirement has been to provide audited financial statements for the last three fiscal years. We request the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania reduce the requirement from the last five fiscal years to the last three fiscal years.</p>	
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Note: In these answers, when a reference is made to information on a FirstNet website, it should be understood that the Commonwealth does not control the content or availability of that information.