

FirstNet Deployable Aerial Communications Architecture Request for Information

August 15, 2013

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) has released 10 Requests For Information (RFIs) seeking input from vendors and stakeholders regarding the radio access network (RAN) and core elements of the nationwide public safety broadband network. FirstNet, an independent entity within the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), is charged with taking all actions necessary to build, deploy, and operate a high-speed, nationwide network dedicated to public safety.

The FirstNet "Deployables" RFI indicates that FirstNet has contemplated the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in the context of a network infrastructure component. Specifically, the RFI spreadsheet on Deployable Network Infrastructure has a tab discussing Deployable Aerial Communications Architecture (DACA), which asks for information on "solutions that would be combined with Aerial deployables (e.g. drones, weather balloons, etc.). All units must be able to communicate with First Responder terminals compliant with 3GPP Band Class 14 specifications."

UAV industry members might consider responding to the FirstNet Deployables RFI to explain how UAVs could be deployed to fill gaps in wireless coverage in areas where the FirstNet network has not yet been deployed, or where terrestrial infrastructure might be compromised.

Additionally, FirstNet has not yet sought input on the possible applications and uses of the network. However, FirstNet representatives have been taking meetings with potential vendors to gather market information. UAV industry participants might consider

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Telecom, Media & Technology
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reaching out to FirstNet to explain how UAVs can be deployed to serve the public safety missions of FirstNet's users.

Formal responses to the RFIs are due August 30, 2013 by 5:00 PM. After FirstNet receives and analyzes responses to the RFIs, it will develop and issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

Links:

- More details about the RFIs are contained in the FirstNet Press Release.
- Deployables RFI and Attachments.