

FirstNet: Art of the Possible

Thank you – it is an honor to be here today to share information about our progress at FirstNet, and to share the stage with my Deputy General Manager, TJ Kennedy, who you will hear from in a few minutes.

I want to thank IWCE for giving us this outstanding opportunity and for putting together a series of what promise to be very informative FirstNet-related tracks throughout the week.

We are pleased to see so many break-out sessions featuring some of the best and brightest from public safety, state governments, large and small cities, the federal government, the vendor community, and members of our Board all converging around the art of the possible for FirstNet. IWCE does a tremendous job of bringing all corners of the public safety community together, and I congratulate them for designing another outstanding conference this year.

The FirstNet team plans to sit in on as many of these sessions as possible. If we haven't met before, please don't hesitate to introduce yourself. We look forward to learning more about how we can work together to deliver the nation's dedicated public safety broadband network. We have a few new staff members here with us who are looking forward to meeting you as well.

Now, if we can go back to the short video introduction for a minute. The clip underscores what a lot of us already know – our first responders rely on communications and information sharing on a daily basis to carry out their mission. It's important to note that mission critical communication isn't an issue just during major emergencies. It's what public safety needs every day to protect and serve the citizens of this country.

In the video, you heard Vice President Biden call for the deployment of a nationwide broadband network, you heard key lawmakers on Capitol Hill voice their strong support for this very initiative, and we've heard from public safety officials – like NYPD Chief Bratton on the need for this dedicated network for our first responders. That vision drives everything we do at FirstNet and is reflected behind me as our Mission Statement.

(FirstNet's mission is to develop, build and operate the country's first nationwide, broadband network dedicated to public safety.)

This is the centerpiece of our work and the ultimate goal of FirstNet.

Over the next 20 minutes, you will get to hear from TJ and me about what we are doing to make the public safety broadband network a reality, along with our thoughts on how to maximize the potential of this network.

We have a unique opportunity to bring public safety communications into the 21st century and provide our first responders with the same technologies and tools that many Americans already have.

At the same time, we must also be forward looking and have one eye on what may be coming over the horizon so that the network is able to foster innovation as technology evolves.

We have a considerable amount of work ahead of us. This has never been done before. Keeping pace with technology is a challenge for vendors and commercial telecommunications providers, much less a governmental entity. And that's where you come in: we need your ideas, your expertise, and your help. Delivering our mission will require an unprecedented level of creativity, partnership, and trust.

Next month marks my first year as the General Manager of FirstNet. That's usually a good time to take stock of what we've accomplished and step through a list of achievements, results, and other indicators of progress. Yes, a lot has been accomplished, but reading our press clippings won't deliver this network to public safety. We will measure success by the ultimate accomplishment – achieving our mission!

So, I won't use my time here today back tracking: let's look ahead into year 2 and beyond. I am truly pleased with how things have come together over the last several months. We've accomplished an awful lot in a relatively short amount of time.

For today and this week – I want to shift the focus to envisioning the Art of the Possible with this network. I hope we spur some interesting discussions and generate new ideas at your breakout sessions and hallway conversations. Let's challenge ourselves to think about how to work together and make this network the centerpiece of public safety communications.

Our first responders deserve to have the same level of mobility and innovation the general public has today. But they need to be able to access these features and services over a network that is interoperable, secure, resilient, and available. We all know there's been explosive growth in the smartphone market and data usage – faster, stronger and more portable computing power, an endless list of new features and applications to download, and many options in the handheld and tablet markets help make our lives more efficient. We need to leverage the capabilities of this marketplace, as much as possible, as we deploy and operate the network.

To that end, we have moved into a new era at FirstNet. Through the development of our roadmap – which we released during our last board meeting – we have a path forward and a plan to address the multitude of variables that must be understood before deploying our network.

We are building our staff to implement our strategies, and we will be systematically implementing a series of steps designed to validate our assumptions, continue to seek public safety input, and to develop the partnerships necessary for our financial sustainability. Our near term efforts are focused on planning, partnering, outreach, and innovation. Let me spend a few minutes outlining some of these next steps, and then I will turn it over to TJ, who will begin to paint a picture of what this network can deliver.

Planning:

“Measure twice cut once” We only have one opportunity to get this right and there are a wide range of variables, decisions, and investments that need to be carefully weighed before we spend

taxpayer funding on anything less than a well thought out plan. My staff and I, with the help of NTIA, the Department of Commerce, and our Board have been working together to develop a comprehensive roadmap that sets the course for our success.

We are confident that when executed, each of the strategies we have set out will narrow our variability and lay the groundwork for the kind transformation in communications that public safety deserves.

Partnering

The legislation contemplated and our initial planning supports the premise that an unprecedented level of public/private partnerships will be necessary in order to build a sustainable network for our nation. Our Network Partner RFI released last year and our ongoing market research discussions give us great confidence that real partners recognize the value of our spectrum assets and the intrinsic value of being involved in this transformational moment in public safety's history. We also continue to work on building and maintaining partnerships within all levels of government: federal, state, local, and tribal. The list of potential partners doesn't stop there. We continue to seek partnerships with wireless carriers, equipment providers, tower companies, utilities, transportation entities, and critical-infrastructure groups.

These partnerships will bring much-needed assets to the table that will help FirstNet deploy the network and bolster ongoing operations.

We simply must harness the collective value of these assets and expertise so that our costs remain low and our pricing brings unmatched value to our customer base.

Outreach:

In the absence of information, people will fill the void with their own opinions. That is not a position that FirstNet wants to find ourselves in.

Our commitment is to be open and transparent with our direction, our challenges, and our plans. I have said many times, our success at the state and local level is a direct correlation to our ability to listen and to communicate our messaging directly. For those of you that have reviewed our strategic roadmap, you'll know that our outreach and consultation plan is a primary focus today and we are committed to expanding it moving forward. Through this process, we'll set the foundation for the relationships required to make our state consultation process a success.

Innovation:

The history of FirstNet is all about innovation. For 5 years public safety found creative ways to stand together to convince congress of their need. Congress found innovative ways to craft and pass the legislation that created FirstNet. The complexities of this project demand that we continue to find innovative ways to complete our mission. Once this network is in place, it will transform not only how public safety responds to disasters, it will change how every day work is performed – making public safety more efficient, more effective and ultimately making our country safer.

Bill Transitions to TJ

This kind of innovation requires a vision of what the art of the possible is and it takes leadership to drive it to reality. I am pleased to share the stage today with my Deputy General Manager, TJ Kennedy.

TJ's commitment to this mission and his leadership skills are making a difference in FirstNet every day.

Many of you know TJ but if you haven't met him yet, I am confident that his energy and passion for this mission will be contagious. Let me have him give you a glimpse into the art of the possible. TJ?

TJ Kennedy (Use Cases – 15 minutes)

Bill D (TJ returns to Bill for Closing)

Thank you TJ. Well, let me wrap this up by saying, what FirstNet is setting out to do has never been done before. FirstNet will enable and will transform the way public safety operates. This is a rare opportunity for the private and public sectors to come together around a mission to innovate together and to leave a lasting legacy for our nation's first responders. Today you saw a glimpse of where we are headed. TJ and I, and our growing staff welcome the opportunity to work with you in the months and years to come as we tackle this challenge one day at time. Thank you for being here and thank you for supporting us in this incredible endeavor.