

Media Contact:

Rochelle Cohen, (202) 418-1162
rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release**FCC ACTS TO SUPPORT DEPLOYMENT OF NATIONWIDE PUBLIC SAFETY NETWORK*****Agency Sets Process for Reviewing ‘Opt-Out’ State Plans to Connect with FirstNet***

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2017 – The Federal Communications Commission today took action to support the deployment of a nationwide network for use by first responders. Today’s decision, consistent with duties entrusted to the FCC by Congress, will help ensure that state-built portions of the network are interoperable with the core network so that public safety officials can communicate seamlessly with each other during emergencies.

In 2012, Congress enacted legislation creating the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) to build and operate a nationwide interoperable public safety broadband network, which will consist of a network core and a radio access network (RAN) that connects with the core to enable wireless communications. The statute requires FirstNet to develop a national plan to deploy the RAN within each state but also gives each state the right to “opt out” and build its own RAN, provided that the state RAN will be interoperable with FirstNet’s core network. Any state that chooses to opt out must submit a plan for its proposed state RAN to the FCC. To obtain FCC approval, the state must demonstrate that its plan meets the interoperability requirements of the statute.

In a Report and Order adopted today, the FCC established the standards and procedures it will use to review state plans. Today’s decision addresses:

- The timeline for states to provide notification of their opt-out decisions and file plans with the FCC;
- Information states should include in their plans to demonstrate compliance with the statutory criteria for interoperability with FirstNet’s network;
- Some of the technical criteria and standards that the FCC will use in evaluating state plans;
- The FCC’s review process, including participation by interested parties, treatment of confidential information, and the timing of FCC action; and
- The FCC’s process for documenting its decisions to approve or disapprove state plans.

In addition, in light of recent filings by FirstNet in the docket, the Report and Order directs the FCC’s Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau to issue a Public Notice seeking comment on one remaining element of the FCC’s review standard, after which the FCC will issue an order on that element.

Today's decision is intended to provide states with a fair and meaningful opportunity to pursue their own network plans without causing undue delay and while still ensuring the integrity of the nationwide network.

Action by the Commission June 22, 2017 by Report and Order (FCC 17-75). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn and O'Rielly approving and issuing separate statements.

PS Docket No. 16-269

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).