Idaho to Transform Communications for Public Safety; Governor Otter Approves Buildout Plan for First Responder Network

First-of-its-Kind Solution Will Create Jobs, Spur Investment and Modernize Public Safety Communications across Idaho

RESTON, Va., Sept. 19, 2017 — Idaho is advancing communications capabilities for first responders. Today, Governor Butch Otter announced his decision to accept the FirstNet and AT&T* plan to deliver a wireless broadband network to the state’s public safety community. FirstNet will bring advanced technologies that will help Idaho’s first responders save lives and protect communities.

“Idaho is pleased to be joining with other states in participating in FirstNet’s deployment of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network,” Governor Otter said. “Timely, reliable and accurate information is critically important to ensuring that our first responders can most effectively protect our citizens. This plan provides us with the opportunity to utilize the best technology available to help maximize public safety in Idaho and across the nation.”

AT&T, in a public-private partnership with FirstNet, will build, operate and maintain a highly secure wireless broadband communications network for Idaho’s public safety community at no cost to the state. The FirstNet network will drive innovation and create an entire system of modernized devices, apps and tools for first responders.

“Advanced communications are critical to first responder safety and help make us more efficient and effective when we respond to calls for assistance from our communities in their times of need,” said Pocatello Fire Chief David Gates. “FirstNet will deliver that advanced communications capability every day. Natural disasters – like the fires we’re fighting right now – know no boundaries. With FirstNet, we can be nimble and adaptable thanks to interoperable communications tools that will give us improved information, coordination and collaboration in emergencies.”

FirstNet will transform the way Idaho’s fire, police, EMS and other public safety personnel communicate and share information. Specifically, it will:

- Connect first responder subscribers to the critical information they need in a highly secure manner when handling day-to-day operations, responding to emergencies and supporting large events like the Caldwell Night Rodeo that attracts more than 40,000 participants annually.
- Create an efficient communications experience for public safety personnel in agencies and jurisdictions across the state during natural disasters, including seasonal wildfires that devastate Idahoan communities, like the 2015 Soda Fires that burned over 256,000 acres across the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Northwest.
- Enhance and expand network coverage across Idaho’s diverse landscape, benefitting first responders and residents throughout the state’s rural areas including mountainous and tribal lands.
- Provide first responders with access to dedicated network assets that can be deployed for additional coverage and support when needed.
- Drive infrastructure investments and create jobs across the state.
• Usher in a new wave of dependable innovations for first responders. This will create an ever-evolving set of life-saving tools for public safety, including public safety apps, specialized devices and Internet of Things technologies. It also carries the potential for future integration with NextGen 9-1-1 networks and Smart Cities’ infrastructure.

FirstNet and AT&T designed Idaho’s network solution with direct input from the state and its Public Safety Communications Commission, helping to address the state’s unique communications needs, including:
• Expanding rural coverage, particularly outside of the Boise area.
• Providing Idaho’s public safety volunteers with Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) solutions.
• Expediting deployment to improve the availability of LTE services throughout the state.
• Implementing FirstNet customer care and support to recognize the unique needs of first responders.

“FirstNet remains focused on delivering the coverage and reliability that emergency responders need across America, including in rural communities,” said FirstNet CEO Mike Poth. “Governor Otter’s decision to join FirstNet shows his strong commitment to public safety, and we look forward to continuing to work with him and the public safety community to deliver the network that Idaho’s first responders need every day and in every emergency.”

The decision enables FirstNet and AT&T to begin creating an entirely new wireless ecosystem for public safety communications. Idaho’s first responder subscribers will have immediate access to quality of service and priority to voice and data across the existing nationwide AT&T LTE network.

Preemption for primary users over the AT&T LTE network is expected by year-end. This means fire, police, EMS and other public safety workers will have dedicated access to the network when and where they need it – 24/7/365, like their mission.

“Governor Otter and the Idaho Public Safety Communications Commission have worked hand in hand with us so that the FirstNet network that’s built in Idaho delivers on our promise,” said Tara Thue, director – AT&T Idaho. “I commend General Brad Richy and his team for all of their leadership in this process and collaboration with our team as we make FirstNet a reality for Idaho’s public safety community.”

For more information on FirstNet, please visit FirstNet.gov/mediakit and att.com/FirstResponderNews. For more about the value FirstNet will bring to public safety, please visit FirstNet.com.

About FirstNet
The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce. Chartered in 2012, its mission is to ensure the building, deployment, and operation of the nationwide, broadband network that equips first responders to save lives and protect U.S. communities. Learn more at FirstNet.gov/mediakit and follow FirstNet (@FirstNetGov) on Facebook and Twitter for updates.
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**Claim based on the Nielsen Certified Data Network Score. Score includes data reported by wireless consumers in the Nielsen Mobile Insights survey, network measurements from Nielsen Mobile Performance and Nielsen Drive Test Benchmarks for Q1 + Q2 2017 across 121 markets.

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