



Presentation by PSBN Innovation Alliance to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

In December 2019, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (“the Commission”) invited interested persons to identify potential barriers and/or regulatory solutions to building new facilities or interconnecting to existing facilities in order to extend broadband-capable mobile wireless networks more efficiently into underserved areas in Canada and give all Canadians access to high-quality voice services and broadband Internet access services.

Specifically, the Commission invited all parties to provide comments, as follows:

- The future of mobile wireless services in Canada, with a focus on reducing barriers to infrastructure deployment.
- Propose potential regulatory measures that are within the Commission’s jurisdiction, to address the identified barriers.
- Given the importance of mobile wireless services, it is necessary to review the associated regulatory framework to ensure that (i) it remains relevant, (ii) the needs of Canadians are met, and (iii) the policy objectives set out in the Telecommunications Act (the Act) are being achieved.
- Any other matters, issues, or proposals that are relevant to, and appropriate for, a broad policy review of mobile wireless services. The Commission’s focus in this proceeding is to ensure that its mobile wireless service regulatory framework facilitates sustainable competition that provides reasonable prices and innovative services, as well as continued investment in high-quality mobile wireless networks in all regions of the country.

In this regard, the PSBN Innovation Alliance will be making oral submissions to the Commission in Gatineau, Quebec, on February 26, 2020.

PSBN Innovation Alliance presenters at the public hearings include:

- Nishan Duraiappah, Chief, Peel Regional Police
- Anthony Odoardi, Superintendent, Halton Regional Police Service, and Executive Director of the PSBN Innovation Alliance
- Phil Crnko, President, Black Castle Networks
- Bill Payne, Director of IT Services, Halton Regional Police Service
- Shawn Slack, Chief Information Officer, City of Mississauga
- Chris Mitchell, Associate Director, Airport Operations, Greater Toronto Airports Authority
- Susan Payne, Manager VCOM and Support Services, Peel Regional Police
- David Lazenby, Chief, City of Burlington Fire Department
- Jennifer Hartman, Manager, Corporate Communications, Halton Regional Police Service
- Jeff McGuire, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police

At the hearing, the PSBN Innovation Alliance will submit that permitting a specialized class of Public Safety mobile virtual network operators (PS-MVNOs) is a key enabling technology tool for ensuring always-available data communications for emergency responders. ***Without broadband connectivity that reliably gets mission critical information for day to day operations, including 911 data to frontline emergency personnel, there can be no effective, coordinated emergency response.***

Additional details regarding the Commission's call for comments regarding potential barriers to the deployment of broadband-capable networks in underserved areas in Canada are available here: <https://bit.ly/2SX8EAR>.

BACKGROUND – PSBN INNOVATION ALLIANCE

Through the leadership of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP), and the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA), the founding members of the PSBN Innovation Alliance (Halton Regional Police Service, Peel Regional Police and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority) work tirelessly together as a not-for-profit entity advocating for public safety agency oversight of a reliable, resilient, secure and interoperable Public Safety Broadband Network.

With a rapidly expanding membership of over thirty public and private partnership agencies, including first responders, critical infrastructure organizations, transit companies, and high-tech companies, the PSBN Innovation Alliance continues to help shape the Canadian governance framework required to successfully operationalize RF spectrum set aside for public safety, and advocates for telecom policy that fosters the establishment of “always-available” mobile communications for Emergency Responders in support of their lifesaving mission.

BACKGROUND – PSBN

A Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) is a secure, high-speed, wireless broadband communications network that provides prioritized and exclusive access to wireless data for first responders and commercial critical infrastructure entities that underpin our modern digital society (e.g. electric utilities, rail and transportation networks, transit systems, energy, potable water control systems, airports, naval ports and more).

A PSBN encompasses the 4G and 5G wireless infrastructure, wireless spectrum, user gear and associated systems that provide for a mission critical grade of data delivery so that first responders have access to critical data in moments of need – whenever and wherever they roam across Canada in their lifesaving efforts.

A PSBN is an important step in securing the telecommunications infrastructure for Canada – at an optimal cost point – and in extending digital connectivity to underserved urban, rural, Indigenous and remote areas and communities to enable access to first responder emergency services and critical infrastructure partners.

First responders depend on digital data to protect Canadians and improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of day to day mission critical operations and 911 response to emergencies. The reliable, resilient and cyber-secure delivery of digital data to first responders has become as important as voice communications for effective frontline emergency response. A broadband system is needed that provides the same degree of resiliency and robustness as legacy two-way land mobile radio systems used by first responders today.