

# **FleetNet Replacement Project**

## **Public Safety Communications Service (PSCS)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

#### **Non Manitoba Government Departments**

##### **Background**

The Government of Manitoba (Manitoba) has entered into a publicly tendered agreement with Bell Mobility Inc. (Bell) for a new Public Safety Communications Service (PSCS). The PSCS will provide a modern trunked mobile radio service for public safety and public service organizations in Manitoba, and will replace the Very High Frequency (VHF) radio system used by Manitoba Sustainable Development.

Over 99% of Manitobans live in the areas that will be covered by PSCS. Engineered to be highly reliable, PSCS is based on modern communications standards and will be built with modern infrastructure and equipment.

The PSCS Agreement was signed on July 30, 2018 for a duration of 18 years (i.e. three-year implementation project and 15-year service life). Bell will be responsible for end-to-end service delivery and operation. PSCS infrastructure (i.e. towers) will be owned and operated by Bell.

##### **What are we doing?**

The current FleetNet service is reaching end of life and a replacement service is required. The PSCS will provide a modern trunked mobile radio service for public safety and public service organizations in Manitoba that meets P25 standards using 700 MHz spectrum that is designated for public safety. Manitoba has entered into an agreement with Bell to provide a new Public Safety Communications Service (PSCS).

##### **When will PSCS be available for use?**

Implementation of PSCS infrastructure is underway, and transition of public safety and public service users to the new service, will take up to three years. The service is expected to be in full production by June 2021.

## **How will Public Safety Entities (PSEs) know when PSCS will be available for their use?**

A transition plan is being developed by Bell and will be communicated to individual PSEs to ensure they know what their responsibilities are and when they will be transitioned to the PSCS.

## **What is P25 technology?**

Project 25 (P25) is the standard for the design and manufacturing of interoperable digital two-way wireless communication products. Developed in North America with provincial/state, local and federal representatives and Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) governance, P25 has gained worldwide acceptance for public safety, security and public service applications.

The published P25 standards suite is administered by the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA). Radio equipment that demonstrates compliance with P25 is able to meet a set of minimum requirements to fit the needs of public safety. The P25 standard was created by, and is intended for, public safety professionals.

## **What does PSCS offer subscribers?**

The service is based on a public safety grade P25 network that is specifically designed and operated for the public safety and public service community in Manitoba. PSCS will provide reliable voice communications to support public safety and public service activities and to help coordinate services during emergencies (e.g. fire, flood). PSCS will enhance interoperability, coverage, security and reliability to effectively respond to emergencies in an efficient and coordinated manner.

## **What are some benefits of PSCS?**

- Expanded coverage
- Geographically redundant core for high availability
- Enhanced core and tower site security
- Higher level of encryption – managed by the RCMP
- Radio spectrum reserved for public safety and public service entities
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Centralized Contract Management
- Governance model with business, technical and service assurance committees
- Services Level Agreements and penalties
- System reporting
- Training and training materials
- Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Planning

## **What is a Public Safety radio system?**

A Public Safety radio system is one that is specifically designed and operated for the public safety community. Systems are constructed to address the demanding requirements of public safety communications such as coverage, interoperability, enhanced security and reliability.

## **Who owns the PSCS?**

The infrastructure and equipment is owned and maintained by Bell. All handheld, base and vehicle radios will continue to be purchased and owned by the PSE.

## **Will PSCS be centrally managed on behalf of PSEs?**

Yes. Manitoba will be responsible for contract management of the Master Services Agreement with Bell. Management of PSCS will include establishing various governance committees that will provide direction on issues of reliability, functionality, dispute resolution, system serviceability and service level accountability.

## **Who will be the users of PSCS?**

PSCS may include a broad range of Government and Non-Government agencies, all of which contribute to public safety of Manitobans.

## **Do I qualify as a user of PSCS?**

In order to qualify for PSCS, each PSE must first meet the requirements set by Industry, Science and Economic Development (ISED) in SRSP-511.

- **Category 1** users (police, fire, and emergency medical services) permitted to use the 700 MHz radio service on the PSCS System.
- **Category 2** users (forestry, public works, public transit, hazardous material clean-up, border protection and other agencies contributing to public safety).
- **Category 3** users (other government agencies and certain non-government agencies) may be permitted to access to the PSCS System during emergencies where their access is controlled by a Category 1 user.

### **Is there a requirement to have my radio configured with encryption?**

Yes. If you are a Category 1 user (police, fire, and emergency medical services), you are required to have encryption. Encryption provides secure transmissions between emergency first responders and dispatch centres. Encryption will ensure protection of personal information, personal health information, incident location and first responder identity. Encryption will also have an impact on interoperability in large-scale events or situations that may need coordination from different levels of the government (federal, provincial, municipal).

### **Do I have to sign an agreement for PSCS with Manitoba?**

Yes. In order to receive PSCS, each PSE must enter into a written Participation Agreement with Manitoba. The Participation Agreement requires each PSE to abide by the provisions contained in the PSE Agreement. Development of the Participation Agreement is underway by Manitoba and will be provided to PSEs. Manitoba will contact each PSE, prior to their transition to PSCS, and ensure that a Participation Agreement has been finalized.

### **What is the cost of PSCS subscriber fees?**

PSCS subscriber fees have not yet been finalized. A fee model is being developed by Manitoba and once finalized the fees will be communicated to PSEs. Fees are presently forecasted to be similar to existing FleetNet subscriber fees. The PSE will be billed directly by Bell on behalf of Manitoba for use of PSCS.

### **Will existing FleetNet radios work on PSCS?**

Requests for information about existing radios and if they can be upgraded to work on PSCS should be directed to your radio supplier or through Bell. For additional information, please refer to the PSCS approved radio list found in the Bell Subscriber Equipment Information Guide.

### **Where can I purchase radios?**

Requests for information about a range of radio models and accessories, upgrades, and new radio purchase should be directed to your radio supplier or through Bell.

**Is it mandatory for municipalities to participate on PSCS?**

No. Participation is voluntary, however participation is encouraged. Broad participation provides for the highest levels of interoperability resulting in better public safety communications and coordinated response.

**Will PSCS replace existing VHF networks and pager services used by municipalities?**

No. PSCS will only replace the existing FleetNet services provided by Bell MTS.

**Has Manitoba engaged the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM)?**

Yes. The AMM has assigned a Senior Policy Analyst to:

- Represent the AMM on the PSCS Key Stakeholder Engagement Group;
- Provide guidance on issues or concerns of interest to the AMM; and
- Facilitate communications with AMM membership.

If you have questions about the FleetNet Replacement Project, contact Nick Krawetz of the AMM at [nkrawetz@amm.mb.ca](mailto:nkrawetz@amm.mb.ca).

**Will there be training available on the features of PSCS?**

Yes. There will be training courses and materials developed on the features and use of PSCS. Once developed they will be available online. Train the trainer courses will be provided during transition to new services and will be scheduled as part of the development of the transition plans for PSEs.

**If I have further questions who do I contact?**

For further information, please contact Bell: [PSCSSupport@BellMTS.ca](mailto:PSCSSupport@BellMTS.ca).