Industry engagement – June to August 2025
Deployable Temporary Coverage Services
Questions for consideration

Overview

On the 4th and 5th of June 2025, NEMA held industry briefing sessions to update providers on the PSMB program. As part of this, NEMA outlined the intent to discuss deployable temporary coverage in more detail with providers. ***The questions included in this document are intended to stimulate discussion. NEMA is not expecting written responses. It is at the discretion of the providers.***

These questions (or part thereof) can be discussed in a 1:1 with NEMA (please advise via psmb@nema.gov.au) or alternatively, responses to relevant questions can be sent to the psmb@nema.gov.au email.

To note:
All information provided to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) will be treated as commercial in confidence.

The Commonwealth may use, retain and copy the information contained in those documents for purposes related to the Project (PSMB), including to assist NEMA to identify, refine and cost capability options, develop any aspect of the acquisition and sustainment implementation strategy and/or prepare any future capability development and/or solicitation documentation.
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Proposed PSMB Deployable Temporary Coverage Services

The PSMB Taskforce is considering options for the provision and support of deployment of Temporary Mobile (4G/5G) Coverage Solutions such as Cells on Wheels (CoWs) and other solutions (incl. cell on wings, small-scale rapid deployable, backpack or suitcase solutions) to swiftly provide PSMB service continuity in response to network outages, heightened network demand or emergency scenarios. These solutions would preferably offer connectivity to:

- Devices with PSMB Subscriber Identity Modules (SIMs) to access all PSMB mobile services including roaming and priority mechanisms, without intervention from PSMB users. This applies to both Network in a Box (NIB) and radio network extension (e.g. eNB) solutions.
- All mobile devices (i.e. non-PSMB users) to make 000 calls
- All mobile devices (i.e. non-PSMB users) to utilise any spare capacity above that required by Public Safety Agencies (PSAs)

These solutions would provide connectivity in areas with no mobile coverage, areas experiencing outages or areas requiring network capacity relief. The deployables would need to be available within the emergency response time envelope which is likely to require same-day deployment.

The PSMB Taskforce is considering the impact of the operational and ownership model on the capability of the solution and the speed of deployment. We are considering solutions that may be owned and managed either directly by the deployable service provider, National PSMB Entity or by individual jurisdictions or PSAs. Some of the PSMB deployables could preferably be self-deployed by PSA users or specialist PSA teams within a couple of hours.

The questions below are intended for technology vendors, Mobile Network Operators, or other service providers (non-vendors) that may offer to provide and/or manage PSMB deployables. Some of the questions may only apply to the entities capable of managing and operating the PSMB deployable solution.

Questions

Deployment Process:

1. Please describe your current process steps and typical timing for deploying a 4G/5G Cell on Wheels and/or similar devices during emergency situations. Please provide any assumptions, constraints or implications including consideration of:
    a. Placement within hazard boundaries where access may be restricted to emergency personnel only, this may require deployment by PSAs themselves, by technicians under escort or in close contact with emergency services.
    b. What telecommunications powers or emergency powers are available or would be required to traverse and/or temporarily occupy private or public property to deploy an asset?
    c. Assets deployed in a coverage zone that is being restored i.e. what would be the consequence of a PSMB deployable being in a coverage area when the existing towers come back online?
2. Noting the answer to the above, how would any existing process be modified or new process be introduced to allow for PSAs and deployable service providers to work together to deploy a Cell on Wheels, or other deployable coverage asset, within a hazard boundary in under 8 hours? Please list any assumptions or requirements.
3. To what degree do the same process constraints (e.g. access, emergency powers) apply to provisioning of generators, other types of power solutions or backhaul kits that could restore coverage from existing base stations? What additional considerations need to be addressed?

Operational Model:

4. Briefly describe the supported operational model variants, including ownership, management approach and rationale for PSMB deployables, including:
    a. What deployment and activation times could be achieved for different types of PSMB deployables?

b. What are the key factors that would need to be addressed to reduce deployment and activation times?

c. What processes would be required to access and use MNO spectrum and connect to the MNO network?

d. Does the operational model, ownership and management approach, differ when using the 4.9GHz band (or other non-MNO bands)?

5. Describe the processes and certification required to enable a PSMB sourced and managed deployable to connect to the MNO network for the purpose of emergency coverage including whether a PSMB deployable can be connected at different times to each of the MNOs.
6. What roles do you see the PSAs/Jurisdictions having in the use and/or deployment of these different types of PSMB deployables?

Solution Features:

7. Briefly describe the characteristics of the deployable solution options that you can offer, including arrangements for the:
    a. Spectrum proposed to be used to provide temporary mobile coverage.
    b. How the PSMB deployable is configured e.g. as a base station, network in a box (including elements of a Core) etc.
    c. On average what coverage area can be achieved from each solution type described above (please note any geographical/environmental assumptions)? And what solutions are available to extend the coverage e.g. mesh?
    d. What functionalities does your management solution provide e.g. remote access for support & maintenance, physical security etc.?
8. Provide your views on the viability of use of 4.9GHz spectrum including the likely future availability of user devices that support 5G 4.9GHz.
9. Provide your views on the viability of other non-MNO spectrum options now and in the future.
10. Briefly describe how the characteristics of the PSMB deployable solution would differ on the basis of using 4.9GHz vs other spectrum.

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