

Emergency wireless network hits snag

by UPI

WASHINGTON - An effort to create a nationwide wireless network for police, firefighters and other emergency responders hit a snag when it drew little investor interest. The Federal Communications Commission had hoped to come up with airwaves dedicated for public safety use through an auction but it drew very little interest, The Washington Post said Thursday. The FCC proposal drew only one bid and that was far below the anticipated cost. The idea was to auction off the airwaves to a company that would build a wireless network to be shared with public-safety groups during emergencies. But, in five days of bidding, the agency received just the one bid for the public-safety portion of the 700-megahertz airwaves up for public auction. The bid was for \$472 million, far short of half of the FCC price of \$1.33 billion. The public-safety portion, called the D block, is one of five chunks of airwaves in the 700-MHz frequency up for auction. Other portions, strictly for commercial use, have attracted the interest of Google, Verizon Wireless and AT&T and are expected to top the minimum FCC price tag of \$10 billion.

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