



– Press Release –

Athonet and AMBRA deploy PriMo Mobile Core and IMS for Canada's first LTE network in an underground mine



Athonet and Ambra have deployed the PriMo Mobile Core at the LaRonde Mine in Quebec, Agnico Eagle's flagship mine and the deepest in the Americas. Data and Voice core network functions run entirely on Athonet's vEPC and vIMS which support mission critical services and are software upgradeable to 5G New Core. The deployment has also been shortlisted for the prestigious International Critical Communications Awards 2018.

Montreal, April 10th 2018 – Athonet and Ambra partnered to deliver Canada's first underground LTE network in the Agnico Eagle's LaRonde Mine in Abitibi, Quebec.

Underground mining represents one of the most challenging and demanding environments to provide mission critical communication services. In recent years, mine operators have sought more advanced technologies that can provide superior broadband solutions. When Agnico Eagle decided to implement an underground means of communication for the LaRonde Zone 5 project, they chose to deploy a private LTE network underground using the Athonet mobile core network solution engineered and deployed by system integrator AMBRA.

Previously, the biggest barrier to the deployment of a sophisticated mission-critical LTE network such as this for an enterprise has been the cost and complexity of the LTE mobile core network which was only affordable at the scale of national mobile operators and often tied to proprietary technology. By replacing the complex hardware-based, monolithic and proprietary architecture of legacy network providers with a fully software-based network running on standard off-the-shelf hardware and an easy-to-use web-based management, Athonet has driven down the cost and complexity by an order of magnitude while maintaining the leading-edge features found in a national network operator.

Athonet’s solution is unique as it is very agile and lightweight yet already built with support for mission-critical (MC-PTT, Rel13/14) and 5G (e.g. user plane/ control plane separation) features. The LaRonde solution comprises a complete mobile core (EPC and IMS) system which is connected to multiple base stations (eNBs) that propagate a signal through many kilometers of tunnels, to support off-the shelf smartphones and devices. The EPC (Enhanced Packet Core) and IMS (IP Multimedia Subsystem for Voice-over-LTE and Video-over-LTE) provide a seamless and secure extension of the corporate voice and data network.

“Athonet has been at the forefront of deploying Industrial-grade LTE networks ever since deploying the world’s first LTE network for a Smartgrid in 2011. We bring the agility and affordability of the IT world to make the most sophisticated mobile operator technology deployable and manageable by the enterprise. Our dedicated enterprise mobile core networks are now deployed by mines in North America, Australia, Latin America and Asia. We are also deployed across the world by utilities, public safety and industry”, says Gianluca Verin, CTO of Athonet.

Eric L’Heureux, CEO, Ambra Solutions, says: “The LTE technology is the most cost effective and reliable solution to provide real-time coverage to several kilometres of underground tunnels. A single LTE radio can cover up to 6km of tunnel, whereas it would take over 60 active Wi-Fi access points to cover the same area.”

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CONTACTS:

ATHONET
Nanda Menon
Tel. +44 7880 642853
nanda.menon@athonet.com

AMBRA SOLUTIONS
Eric L’Heureux
Tel. +1 877 374 3997
eric.lheureux@ambra.co

About Athonet

Athonet provides a 5G-Ready fully in-house developed 100% software-based mobile core for voice and data networks that runs in public & private clouds, virtualized or enterprise data center environments using standard commercial off-the-shelf hardware.

Together with Athonet's EPC, IMS for VoLTE, NB-IoT and eMBMS solutions, the Athonet platform allows wireless operators and end-users to break free from the restrictive, complex and expensive architecture of legacy solutions and embrace the true potential of mobile networks – capturing new sources of revenue whilst also massively reducing capex and opex.

Athonet is a winner of the GSMA Global Mobile Awards in 2016 and its solutions are used by network operators, governments and enterprises across the world.

About Ambra Solutions

Ambra Solutions provides telecom engineering services and deploys carrier grade networks for mission critical applications. The company provides turnkey solutions for mining, oil and gas and utilities customers including LTE spectrum, customized SIM cards, RF design and full integration of LTE core with existing corporate networks.

About Agnico Eagle

Agnico Eagle is a senior Canadian gold mining company with eight mines in Canada, Finland, and Mexico. LaRonde is Agnico Eagle's flagship mine, located in the Abitibi region of northwestern Quebec. LaRonde has produced more than 5 million ounces of gold since it opened in 1988.