ZTE Lands China Mobile LTE Contract

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ZTE Monday announced that it has won the contract for China Mobile’s TD-LTE rollout in five major Chinese cities.

According to the contract, ZTE will construct China Mobile’s TD-LTE networks in Beijing, Tianjin, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Shenyang, with more than 13,000 carrier frequencies.

In China Mobile’s earlier TD-LTE project in Hong Kong, ZTE was assigned 50 percent of the construction work. ZTE has become the largest LTE device supplier for all such projects initiated by China Mobile.

China Mobile launched the TD-LTE bidding in August 2012, which included contracts for some 20,000 base stations and 52,000 carrier sectors. The TD-LTE devices purchased by China Mobile will be deployed in an expanded trial TD-LTE network in 13 Chinese cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Xiamen, Qingdao, Tianjin, Shenyang, Ningbo, Chengdu and Fuzhou.

Huawei, Ericsson and Nokia Siemens were also in the bidding for the contract.

Advancement of China Mobile's TD-LTE is good news for U.S. carrier Clearwire, which has opted to roll out TD-LTE in this country. Verizon Wireless and AT&T have both opted to use FD-LTE. China Mobile's backing of TD-LTE was important to drive scale of the alternative technology to promote device availablity and bring down equiopment costs.

Clearwire's bet may be paying off. Research firm Ovum predicts TD-LTE will go "mainstream" over the next four years, with 25 percent of all LTE connections forecast to include TD-LTE by 2016.

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