

## Arizona FirstNet terminates deals with multiple contractors

Urgent Communications By Donny Jackson

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All contractors for Arizona [FirstNet](#)—the state entity charged with educating stakeholders in Arizona about the FirstNet project—abruptly had their contracts terminated last week, one of key contractors told [IWCE's Urgent Communications](#).

Michael Britt, a consultant who has led the Arizona FirstNet effort since its inception, said he was told last Thursday night that his contract was being terminated as part of a “cost-cutting” measure. The notice was a surprise, he said.

“I was terminated and told, ‘Do not come back tomorrow,’” Britt said during an interview with *IWCE's Urgent Communications*

Britt said three other contractors working with Arizona FirstNet—Karen Allen, Gregory Sundie and Mike Golden—also were terminated. All were informed by officials from Matrix Resources, the subcontractor to Knowledge Services, a firm that oversees all contracting work for the state of Arizona, Britt said.

In addition to working with Arizona FirstNet, Britt heads the Western States Alliance, which is a group of 16 states in the western U.S. that is working cooperatively to share information and resources about FirstNet. Britt said his last task was to write the state’s response to FirstNet’s draft RFP documents, which had to be submitted by July 27.

Britt said he is unsure about the status of Michael Sherman, Arizona’s single point of contact (SPOC) to FirstNet, the federal authority charged with deploying a nationwide broadband network for public safety.

On Monday, *IWCE's Urgent Communications* left a message on Sherman’s state-office phone

line, but no return call was received. Multiple attempts by *IWCE's Urgent Communications* to reach Sherman at the same number today failed, with the line providing only a fast busy signal.

FirstNet is scheduled to consult its initial consultation with the state of Arizona on Sept. 15.

*IWCE's Urgent Communications* made multiple calls to the Arizona Department of Administration—the state entity that administers the contracts for Arizona FirstNet—on Monday and Tuesday, but they had not been returned as of posting time for this article.

Throughout the Arizona state government, cost-cutting measures have been taken to address budget shortfalls—efforts that have helped the state realize a [\\$266 million surplus](#) that was announced last month, according to reports. However, the funds used to finance the Arizona FirstNet initiative are from the federal State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP), not state general-fund revenues.

Britt said it is his understanding that Arizona has plenty of SLIGP money to continue the current program and that SLIGP funds cannot be diverted into other state programs.

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