

Rivada will not bid on state RFPs until FirstNet announces nationwide contractor, co-CEO Ganley says

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Rivada Networks and Rivada Mercury will not consider submitting bids in response to any current or future state requests for proposals (RFPs) to build public-safety [LTE](#) radio access networks (RANs) until after

[FirstNet](#)

announces the winner of its nationwide RFP sometime next month, according to Rivada Networks co-CEO Declan Ganley.

“We had said a long time ago that we would not respond to any more state RFPs—I think we said that last spring,” Ganley said yesterday during an interview with [IWCE](#)’s *Urgent Communications*

“Given that we are so close now to seeing what FirstNet’s decision is, we are not going to be responding to any further state RFPs.”

Rivada Networks won the RFP competition that gives the company exclusive rights to build a statewide RAN for the state of New Hampshire, if that state chooses to pursue the opt-out alternative next year. The opt-out alternative does not mean that a state will not participate in FirstNet; the opt-out alternative requires the state—instead of FirstNet—to build the RAN within its borders.

Recently, the states of Alabama and Arizona released RFPs similar to the one completed by New Hampshire. Alabama bids are due on Friday, and Arizona bids are due on Oct. 31. With FirstNet not expected to make its contractor announcement until sometime in November, Rivada Networks and Rivada Mercury—the bidding team led by Rivada Networks that is vying for the nationwide FirstNet prize—would not participate in these procurements under the current timelines, Ganley said.

In addition, if Rivada Mercury wins the nationwide FirstNet procurement, Rivada Mercury and Rivada Networks would not participate in a state RAN procurement, Ganley said.

“We are not responding to anything until after we see what FirstNet’s decision is,” he said. “And, of course, if FirstNet decides that Rivada Mercury is the best decision for them and for public safety nationwide, then, obviously, we would not be responding to any further state RFPs.”

“We are going to wait until we receive the FirstNet decision, and then any future RFP responses will be based upon that.”

If Rivada Mercury does not win the nationwide FirstNet procurement, Ganley indicated that Rivada Networks or Rivada Mercury would be willing to consider participating in subsequent RFPs for state RAN deployments.

“We’re not going away,” Ganley said. “We’re here to serve public safety and the public-safety broadband communications mission, and that mission will remain.”

Ganley said he decided to make the announcement about Rivada’s state RFP intentions to clarify the company’s position amid speculation that several additional states could issue RFPs in the near future.

In recent years, there has been considerable industry speculation that Rivada Networks has promoted the opt-out alternative to officials in multiple states. Ganley has acknowledged that his company has explored the opt-out concept with many state officials but steadfastly has denied that Rivada has encouraged any state to make an opt-out decision before seeing [FirstNet](#)’s proposal for the state—a position he reiterated yesterday.

“We are aware that there are multiple states that are close to putting RFPs on the street,” Ganley said. “I would say to anybody who hasn’t already done it, we’re so close now to FirstNet’s decision, let’s wait for FirstNet decision.”

“Because we have always said that we have not advocated—ever—that states opt out. We do not believe that is the best path forward, and we believe that there is at least one path forward through FirstNet that’s going to be extremely compelling to states, and they should wait to see at least what FirstNet’s decision is.”

Ganley noted that no state is going to make a contractual award from these state RFPs, because nothing can be built in an opt-out state until the multilayered process is completed and a spectrum-lease agreement with FirstNet is signed.

Rivada Networks won the New Hampshire RFP, but Ganley said the state would benefit more from the Rivada Mercury plan for the state in its nationwide proposal—assuming it is selected for the nationwide FirstNet buildout—than the Rivada Networks bid prepared just for the state.

“I am certain of that, because I know what’s in both,” Ganley said.

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