Government, Industry & Global experts call for Secure, Interoperable, and Technology-neutral Critical Communications Architecture

Two-day Critical Communications India 2026 Conference charts the way forward for resilient, self-healing and future-ready public-safety networks

New Delhi, 3 September 2026: The Broadband India Forum (BIF), in association with the Critical Communications Association (TCCA), today concluded the 2nd edition of the **Critical Communications India Conference**, following two days of intensive deliberations on strengthening India's communications preparedness for public safety, disaster response and strategic national infrastructure.

The Conference brought together senior representatives from Government, regulators, public safety and disaster management agencies, standards organisations and the global mission-critical communications industry. The Conference witnessed participation from Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, TRAI; Shri Krishna S. Vatsa, Member & Head of Department, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA); Shri Prasanna R.; Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs; Shri Sanjay Agrawal, Director-DCPW; senior officials from the DoT, TRAI, the Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless (DCPW) and BSNL, alongside senior police leadership from the State Departments along with other senior leaders from government, industry, public safety agencies, utilities, enterprises . The Conference also featured eminent international speakers and subject matter experts including Board Members of TCCA, besides experts from Airbus, Ericsson, Etherstack, Qualcomm, Sepura, Tejas Networks, Frequentis, Motorola Solutions, Rohde & Schwarz, Niral Networks, Consort Digital, Telecom operators like Airtel, Vi and other organisations working at the forefront of mission-critical communications.

Following the inaugural day's strategic deliberations, the second day focused on aspects proof of concept, standardisation and interoperability of networks and devices, the evolution of the next generation of device ecosystems, control centers and aspects related to backward compatibility with legacy devices along with the interoperability and implementation pathways for next-generation critical communications networks.

The discussions highlighted one important issue and that is whether India should have a dedicated BB-PPDR Network or should utilise the capacity of the existing operators' commercial network. An associated issue that came up was regarding whether there should be a dedicated spectrum for PPDR or should the PPDR network utilise the commercial operator's spectrum. Participants stressed the importance of seamless interoperability, priority communications for first responders, operational resilience and extensive field testing to ensure that systems perform reliably in the worst of times.

On India's progress towards BB-PPDR, participants deliberated the successful Proof of Concept undertaken by the state level police and public safety agencies in coordination with Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless (DCPW) at 6 different locations spread across different geographies

and terrains and climatic conditions , across the country. The session chaired by **Shri Deepak Pandey**, ADGP-Technical (Maharashtra), emphasized the valuable operational learnings from extensive user trials, and the importance of continued stakeholder engagement to support future deployment. It also brought out the different perspectives from the standpoint of the user and the operator.

Setting the context for the day's deliberations, Brig. (Retd.) Anil Tandan, Director General, Broadband India Forum, observed that the discussions on Day 1 had established the importance of resilient network architectures, interoperability across platforms and agencies, dedicated spectrum, robust standards, field validation and close collaboration between Government and industry.

The second day commenced with an Opening Session presided over by **Shri Harinder Kumar**, Secretary, TRAI. **Speaking on the occasion Secretary, TRAI, reiterated:**

"Critical communications is a complex ecosystem and the requirements differ for different kinds of disasters. India has made significant progress in strengthening public warning systems but the focus must now shift towards ensuring that these capabilities reach every intended user and continue evolving with technology. We also need to understand why captive private networks have not yet scaled in the country and address the barriers to their adoption. Going forward, DoT, the Ministry of Home Affairs, disaster management agencies and telecom service providers must work together to build hardened telecom infrastructure in disaster-prone areas."

Mr. Tero Pesonen, Chairman, TCCA, focused on the role of TCCA, and stressed that globally, we need to build a common voice to address the legal and regulatory challenges of mission-critical communications. While 3GPP and ETSI standards provide the baseline, every layer of the ecosystem has an equally important role—from industry implementing technologies and operators deploying networks, to Governments establishing the legal and regulatory framework, and user agencies defining operational requirements.

Commenting on the successful conclusion of the Conference, **Mr. T.V. Ramachandran, President, Broadband India Forum**, said:

""In a crisis, communications are not merely another infrastructure service—they are the lifeline on which every other emergency response depends. Our systems must therefore remain trusted, resilient and available precisely when ordinary networks are under their greatest strain and when citizens and first responders need them the most."

The Conference concluded with the GCF–TCCA Mission Critical Services (MCS) Certification Workshop complementing the conference with practical discussions on standards, testing, certification and interoperability to support the deployment of next-generation mission-critical communications.

About Broadband India Forum (BIF) Broadband India Forum is an independent policy forum and think tank working towards the development of India's broadband and broadcasting ecosystem in a technology- and service-neutral manner.

About TCCA The Critical Communications Association (TCCA) is a global not-for-profit body representing critical communications professionals — users, operators and industry — and supporting the development of standardised, secure and interoperable mission-critical communications technologies worldwide.