

APCO Partners with TETRA Group on Broadband (5/15/12)

By Sandra Wendelken

The Global Alliance of the Association for Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the TETRA + Critical Communications Association (TCCA) announced they will work together to support the U.S. Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) laboratories.

The APCO-TCCA partnership underscores that it is critical that the world's governments ensure a coordinated global approach by standards bodies for Long Term Evolution (LTE) for public safety and mission-critical communications. The 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) is the body developing the LTE standard. The primary purpose of the affiliation is to make certain that the 3GPP and other standards bodies are informed of the needs of the world's public-safety agencies for LTE standards.

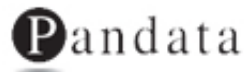
Earlier this year, PSCR staff worked with TCCA to potentially add public-safety LTE requirements through the 3GPP standards process. PSCR representatives were having a difficult time convincing the 3GPP standards groups that LTE would be a standard for public-safety communications outside the United States. Phil Godfrey, chairman of TCCA, wrote a TCCA letter to 3GPP, supporting the U.S.-based request for public-safety standards for LTE.

"PSCR representatives are aware of the fact that 3GPP is not interested in one-off special requirements for just one country, even if it's as big as the U.S.," Godfrey said. "They asked if there was any chance that we could support the request. I was quite happy to write that letter, and it's an important piece of functionality for the standard. The TCCA support made a big difference in how 3GPP supported the request. It was a big demonstration that to get changes to the LTE standard, we must demonstrate a worldwide requirement."

“The Global Alliance and the TCCA believe that the research being undertaken by the PSCR on public-safety communications is critical to identifying the needs of the public-safety community for LTE and therefore fully supports the efforts of the PSCR to have these needs recognized by standards bodies,” said APCO President Gregg Riddle.

“The Global Alliance and the TCCA believe that the formation of new affiliations, such as theirs, will produce the combined expertise and influence necessary to increase the awareness for the world’s public-safety agencies to have access to LTE, through a level of collaboration, cooperation and coordination between agencies, their bureaucracies and governments — in conjunction with the private sector — on a scale not seen before.”

The 2012 TETRA World Congress is under way in Dubai this week.



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