MCX Enabling Leader Softil Issues State of the Union 2022

L3Harris and Sepura Dual-Mode LMR/MCX Devices jointly win Softil's Accolade of the Year; MCX solidifies global momentum

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL, February 14, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Softil, the world's leading mission-critical communications (MCX) enabler, today released its much-awaited annual state-of-the-union review of the MCX industry covering the 2022 period. MCX device providers L3Harris and Sepura jointly win its MCX Accolade of the Year.

"The year 2022 was another important year in the developing history of broadband mission-critical communications," says Pierre Hagendorf, Softil's CEO. "The standout development was undoubtedly the introduction of dual-mode LTE/MCX devices for blue light agencies enabling them to better grasp the many advantages of MCX group communications during life threatening incidents using a familiar form factor."

Specifically:

Dual Mode TETRA/MCX Devices

In the cache of tools that first responders use daily, the humble radio communications device is probably the most important. Despite group-wide broadband mission-critical communications being available to them for more than five years, the basic radio remains "the tool" for emergency communications during incidents.

It was therefore inevitable that new dual-mode broadband communication devices came to market using the familiar form factor of the ruggedized, trusted radio to drive change. These dual-mode LMR/LTE radios, such as those now offered by L3Harris and Sepura, give first responders immediate connectivity with MCX networks around the world including those of AT&T FirstNet and Southern Linc's Critical Linc, all packaged in the familiar radio form-factor.

For the first time, blue light agencies saw the benefits of interagency group calls using dual mode radio and MCX handsets, as well as in private MCX calls between radios and MCX handsets. The

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result? First responders worked faster and better saving many more lives in the process.

Continued Buildout of Public Safety Broadband

The year 2022 saw South Korea announcing a complete switch in 2023 to MCX public safety broadband, which includes not only first responders but also train communications, Coast Guard and maritime communications. The goal is to completely turn off radio communications by the end of 2024. In the UK, the Home Office demonstrated its unwavering commitment to rolling out the MCX-based Emergency Services Network (ESN) and start the procurement process for a new MCX core server.

In the US, AT&T FirstNet continued to develop its dedicated public safety network adding 5G capabilities and increasing the number of public safety subscribers to now over four million users. Southern Linc advanced its Critical Linc network offering mission-critical push-to-talk (MCPTT) capabilities to utility and first responder customers.

TELUS in Canada announced its MCX service powered by Samsung MCX servers becoming the first network operator in Canada to offer 3GPP open standards-based public safety broadband communications solutions to first responders.
Other service providers, such as T-Mobile, Verizon and Bell Canada continued to evaluate their options to offer standards-based public safety communications networks to first responder customers. Watch the Softil blog for updates.

Clearing the Fog - Public Safety Operators Setting Up Transition plans

When new technology becomes “the talk of the town” with amazing features that appear obvious yet ingenious at the same time, the technologists always feel that transition from old to new will be instantaneous. The benefits are so great and obvious. In reality, public safety communication tools are so essential that replacing them requires very careful and methodical planning, and transition is anything but instantaneous.
However, the year 2022 saw MCPTX technologies building enough momentum and trust for Public Protection and Disaster Relief organizations around the world to announce transition plans towards broadband powered public safety communications.

Belgium’s ASTRID, Finland’s Virve 2.0, France’s RRF, Germany’s BDBOS, Norway’s NGN, Sweden’s MSB Rakel 2 and many other national public safety organizations planning their initial introduction of MCPTX communications by 2026 with both broadband and narrowband communications running in parallel. By 2028, they expect that MCPTX technology will become

the fundamental tool of public safety daily communications, and the use of LMR devices will drastically subside.

Other MCX 2022 Highlights – FRMCS, MCX Recording

Work on the Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS) continued at pace. In 2022. Delegates involved in the development of this important MCX system defined further rules for 5G alignment and added more 3GPP standards enhancements and functionality. A number of testing and proof-of-concept projects were developed.

MCX recording solutions also became critical in 2022 to first responder control room operations. As MCX deployments grew in first responder groups, so did MCX recording proof-of-concept testing in control rooms around the globe.

Testing, testing, testing

When communications are designated “mission-critical,” so becomes testing. In a world driven by open standards, ensuring interoperability of MCX systems and solutions becomes paramount.

Interoperability testing continued strongly in 2022. First there was a virtual ETSI Plugtest dedicated to FRMCS functionality focusing on MCX FRMCS-related features such as Functional Alias, Multi-talker, MCData, IPCon and so on. This virtual event was followed by an ETSI plugtest in Malaga, Spain, three years after the previous plugtest in Kuopio in 2019, and was attended by more than 90 engineers and a number of technologists remotely. The Malaga face-to-face event was focused on both MCX and FRMCS, and saw a slew of testing activities dedicated to the 3GPP release 17 functionality and advanced MCX features. There were also discussions about the joint GCF/TCCA MCX testing work geared toward an official MCX certification program, which could be offered as soon as the 2023/2024 timeframe. Follow the Softil blog for updates.

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About Softil

Softil is the leading enabler of IP communications solutions for mission-critical telecommunications products and services. Softil’s BEEHD framework (SDK) is the key enabling technology behind a wide range of 3GPP MCX mission-critical communication solutions, devices, and products, as well as rich media applications for Enterprise and IMS/VoLTE. With more than 800 major corporations across the globe as customers, Softil’s many technological achievements include the pioneering of Voice and Video over IP, combining its unique expertise in standards-based signaling, multimedia and IMS. Softil’s award-winning suite of Protocol Stacks includes IMS, Diameter, SIP, MSRP, and others. Softil enabling technologies ensure simplified development and earliest roll-out of new products to market. Visit https://www.softil.com.

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