



AUSTRALIA-INDIA CABLES DIALOGUE 2026

STRENGTHENING SUBMARINE CABLE SUPPLY CHAINS

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2026 | MUMBAI

Submarine cable networks carry approximately 99% of international data traffic and form the physical backbone of the Indo-Pacific's digital economy. While policy discussions have traditionally focused on protecting cable infrastructure and responding to cable faults, increasing attention is being directed towards the resilience of the industrial ecosystem that supports these networks.

Cable supply chains are highly concentrated, with a small number of firms dominating manufacturing, specialised components, cable-laying vessels and repair capabilities. Recent incidents in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere have highlighted the operational consequences of this concentration, affecting repair timelines, procurement options and long-term network planning.

For Australia and India, these dynamics shape decisions on which systems to build, where to land, who to partner with, and how to finance systems over a 25-year cable lifecycle. Both governments have identified submarine cable resilience as a strategic priority – reflected in Australia's 2023-2030 Cyber Security Strategy and India's draft National Telecommunications Policy 2025. According to Pillar One of the 2026 [Australia-India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains](#), both countries are committed to supporting "secure, trusted, reliable and resilient undersea cable connectivity across the Indo-Pacific."

Building on the inaugural [Australia-India Cables Dialogue](#) held in Perth in July 2025, the Australia-India Cables Dialogue 2026 will bring together leading Australian, Indian and regional submarine cable industry, government, investor and research experts to identify practical pathways for cooperation on submarine cable supply chain security. The Dialogue is hosted by the Australia India Institute, based at the University of Melbourne, the International Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore and the La Trobe Centre for Global Security, La Trobe University. The Dialogue is supported by a multi-year grant from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under its Australia-India Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership program (Round 5).

DISCUSSION THEMES

- Strengthen Australia-India cooperation on the resilience and long-term security of submarine cable supply chains across the Indo-Pacific.
- Assess strategic vulnerabilities throughout the submarine cable lifecycle, including manufacturing, component supply, deployment and maintenance, and examine how these are likely to evolve over the coming decades.
- Identify diversification opportunities, from building the network to deployment and maintenance, including through coordinated investment, industry partnerships and workforce development.
- Develop practical, policy-oriented recommendations that support secure, resilient and competitive submarine cable supply chains, informing future government, industry and regional cooperation across the Indo-Pacific.

KEY AREAS OF INTEREST

- Supply chain vulnerability and resilience
- Manufacturing capability, components and trusted suppliers
- Cable deployment and repair capacity
- Investment, financing and industrial partnerships
- Bilateral and regional policy coordination

ABOUT US

AUSTRALIA INDIA INSTITUTE

The Australia India Institute is Australia's leading centre dedicated to promoting support for and understanding of the Australia-India relationship and its cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Since its establishment in 2008, the Institute has established a reputation for high-quality research and analysis. We have built an influential network across business, government, think tanks and academia that has helped shape engagement with decision-makers in both countries.

With the support of our funding partners and donors, the Institute's mission is to inform and mobilise Australian and Indian leaders and institutions to forge a stronger and more enduring relationship between our two countries.

In this mission, the Institute is guided by the principles of *bharosa* (trust), *maryada* (respect), *gyan* (knowledge) and *kalyan* (welfare).

SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICS PILLAR

The security and geopolitics pillar focuses on the security, defence, foreign policy and strategic affairs critical to both Australia and India, as well as geopolitical developments in the Indo-Pacific region. Under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) and 2+2 Ministerial Dialogues, both countries have committed to increasing security and defence cooperation on a bilateral basis and within multilateral institutions in order to build and maintain a stable, peaceful, prosperous, and inclusive region.

Through engagement with policy-makers, leading experts, analysts and researchers, this program develops shared understandings of our regional security environment and the Australia-India security and defence relationship. This pillar examines cooperation in defence capabilities, maritime security, intelligence-sharing and counter-terrorism, and in the enhancement of regional security institutions and relationships.

"AUSTRALIA AND INDIA HAVE A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS REGION, MAKING THEM NATURAL PARTNERS TO BUILD SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE AND MAINTENANCE OF SUBMARINE CABLE NETWORKS IN THE INDO-PACIFIC."

Dr Samuel Bashfield
Academic Fellow
Australia India Institute

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