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# **ICPC Recommendation**

## **Recommendation No. 4**

### **Recommended Co-ordination Procedures for Repair Operations near Active Cable Systems**

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## Contact for Enquiries and Proposed Changes

If you have any questions regarding this document or suggestions for improving it, please send an email to the ICPC's [general.manager@iscpc.org](mailto:general.manager@iscpc.org)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the cost of restoration and length of outage time for submarine cable systems, the following procedures are recommended with respect to any repair operations that are undertaken near active cable systems.

While damage to a cable resulting from repair operations on another cable is an extremely rare occurrence, strict adherence to the procedures documented in this Recommendation will provide an additional level of protection. The safe separation distance between two cables will vary from case to case, depending on factors such as weather and sea conditions, water depth, proposed repair methods, confidence in cable location information and the available navigational controls. The following procedures apply to the repair operations of active cable systems in the vicinity of any cable crossing or cables that are closely parallel.

## 3. RECOMMENDED CO-ORDINATION & OPERATING PROCEDURES

- i) The Repair Co-ordinator for emergency or planned cable repair operations shall notify those Maintenance Authorities responsible for all cables crossed or in Close Parallel with the cable being repaired.

When an **emergency repair** is required, immediate notification shall be given to all of the involved parties.

A minimum of two weeks advance notification shall be given to all involved parties prior to any planned operational activity that could affect the performance of active submarine cables.

The notification shall include essential details of the proposed repair operation procedure, including information on schedule, identification of repair ship, location of proposed grappling, cable pickup, cable laying and cable burial activities, and the devices to be used for the repair work. As not all essential details may be immediately available, the initial notification shall give an indication as to when the remaining essential details will be made available.

- ii) Maintenance Authorities shall provide the Repair Co-ordinator with the name, contact telephone number(s), Fax number(s) and e-mail address(es) of a representative to be the responsible point of contact during the repair operation, so that any changes in plans can be communicated and/or problems resolved with a minimum of delay.
- iii) Maintenance Authorities shall respond promptly (within 24 hours) to the Repair Co-ordinator, providing location details and any other information that would help to avoid active cables.

Cable location records shall be current and include any recent changes as a result of repairs etc. Uncertainties regarding the recorded cable positions shall also be clearly noted.

- iv) The Repair Co-ordinator shall promptly advise involved Maintenance Authorities of actual repair start and completion times/dates and any changes in the repair operation plans that could impact active cable systems in the Repair Area.

- v) The Repair Coordinator may, at its discretion, provide progress reports to the Maintenance Authorities.
- vi) Where an active cable crosses over a faulty cable that is being repaired, under no circumstances shall attempts be made to pull the faulty cable out. Such action poses a significant risk of causing serious damage to the insulation of the overlying active cable by kinking and/or abrasive sawing action.
- vii) To avoid the possibility of damaging an overlying active cable during pickup operations (and with due regard to any existing crossing agreement between the cable owners involved) the cable and submerged plant of the underlying cable system shall be abandoned and not disturbed for a distance on both sides of the crossing location. Such distance is to be agreed with the Repair Co-ordinator on a case by case basis. As a minimum, the agreed distance shall include consideration of water depth, repair methods, confidence in cable location information, available navigational control methods and anticipated Cable Catenary.
- viii) Depending on the circumstances, the Repair Co-ordinator shall consider the possibility of utilising a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) to assist in cable location, cutting and recovery.
- ix) Following completion of a repair, the Repair Co-ordinator shall promptly provide the Maintenance Authorities responsible for cables in the Repair Area with details of the location of the repaired cable section and any submerged plant abandoned in place. Such details shall also indicate whether the repaired cable is overlying or underlying cables at each crossing location in the Repair Area.

### 3. REFERENCES

Document Number	Title
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### 4. DEFINITIONS

The following words, acronyms and abbreviations are referred to in this document.

Term	Definition
<b>Cable Catenary:</b>	An effect whereby, depending on the cable size and speed of recovery, a cable will lift off the seabed for a distance away from the recovery ship that can equal several times the depth of the water.
<b>Close Parallel:</b>	Any parallel of cables which has the potential to affect maintenance of the cables involved.
<b>Maintenance Authority (MA):</b>	The organisation responsible for the operation and maintenance of a particular submarine cable system.
<b>Repair Area:</b>	Area wherein grappling, cable recovery, or cable laying / post lay burial are planned in connection with a repair.
<b>Repair Co-ordinator:</b>	The party responsible for undertaking a particular repair operation.