Session # 3

CIL Workshop on Submarine Cables and Law of the Sea

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International Cable Protection Committee

- ICPC has over 100 members representing telecommunication and power companies, government agencies and scientific organizations from over 50 countries (2009).
- ICPC represents 98% of all international cable km.

Countries where ICPC Members are located
Countries where Member cables land
Repair of Damaged Cables

- The risk of a serious network failure is increased when a submarine cable is broken.
- Any delay to cable repair increases that risk.
- Eliminating repair delays is essential to improve network security.
Industry Best Practice

- Fast fault localisation
- Strategically located cable system spares
- Strategically located cable repair ships with fast mobilisation capability

Source: Alcatel-Lucent Submarine Networks
Repair Delays

Some coastal states:

- Insist on permit(s) that take 2-6 weeks before a repair can take place and increasing time to repair
- Require permits from multiple agencies each of which require significant information some of which is duplicated
- Require fees & guard boats for repairs beyond territorial seas
Government Best Practice

- Majority of coastal states require no permits for repair operations either within or beyond territorial waters
- Some coastal states require 24 hour notification of repair operation
Compromise Suggestion

- It is recognised that some coastal states have security concerns and the following has been offered to address them:
  - having pre-certified cable ships
  - providing notice prior to repair
  - allowing an observer on board
  - providing access to repair data

- Unfortunately the coastal states involved have so far not responded
Permitting Delays

Recommendation

- Eliminate all permits / licences / fees /guard boat requirements for all repairs to international cables beyond territorial seas
- Accord cable repair ships innocent passage status for the purpose of undertaking repairs within territorial seas
Sharing the seabed in harmony