Session # 5

CIL Workshop on Submarine Cables and Law of the Sea

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Protecting Cables during Operation
Best Industry Practice

- ICPC Recommendation # 6 provides Best Industry Practice for Protection of Submarine Cables and covers
  - Dissemination of cable route information
  - Stakeholder Liaison & Education
  - Legal
  - Monitoring Security of Cable Routes
ICPC Recommendation #6 - Legal
Cable Protection Zone Example

- Australian Government has recognised the strategic importance of submarine cables
- Protection zones designated for Southern Cross & Australia-Japan cable systems
- Zones are 3.7km wide & run to 2000m water depth
- High risk operations banned & low risk activities restricted
- Criminal penalties up to $A330,000 &/or 10 years prison

Source: Australian Communications & Media Authority
ICPC Recommendation # 6
Monitoring Security of Cable Route
Port Radar Coverage – Larne

Port of Larne Limits

Port Radar Station
ICPC Recommendation # 6
Monitoring Security of Cable Route
Automatic Identification System (AIS)
Monitoring Security of Cable Route
Automatic Identification System (AIS)

- Determining cause of fault can be uncertain
- Cable operators in UK started using AIS in 2006
- AIS provided conclusive proof for faults caused by anchor and volume far greater than expected
- Also proved existence of two types of fault due to anchor:
  - ship dragging it’s anchor whilst at anchor
  - ship dragging it’s anchor whilst underway
- Second type most prevalent around UK
- Not limited to UK as demonstrated off Sicily
Monitoring Security of Cable Route
How Governments can Help

Regulations need to be implemented and enforced regarding the minimum precautions to be taken by vessels to secure anchors correctly prior to sea passage.

Riding pawl

Courtesy Tyco Telecommunications
Monitoring Security of Cable Route

BT use of AIS

- Used AIS to determine
  - 5 faults - ship dragging whilst at anchor
  - 16 faults - ship dragging whilst underway
- Used AIS to obtained compensation for 18 faults with 3 cases pending
- Working with UK Maritime Coastguard Agency but potential for more proactive role
- Used AIS to prevent 10 faults
Sharing the seabed in harmony