



ICPC Recommendation

Recommendation No. 1

Management of Redundant and Out-Of-Service Cables

Note: Issue status suffix 'A' relates to minor format changes, not content.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides the ICPC's recommendations in relation to a submarine cable system that is redundant or has been taken out of service, hereafter collectively referred to as an "OOS Cable". The recommendations are given in 2 parts as follows:

- 1.1. OOS Cables - Planning Considerations
- 1.2. OOS Cables - Removal Considerations

2. OOS CABLES - PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

To promote best industry practice and facilitate a good working relationship with other seabed users it is recommended that:

- 2.1. the drafting of new construction and maintenance agreements provides for the recovery of limited lengths of the cable after it has been taken out of service.
- 2.2. when constructing a new cable following a route in the vicinity of an OOS Cable, the owners of the new cable shall, in agreement with the owners of the OOS Cable, arrange for the recovery of those sections of the OOS Cable that are required to clear the new route. *NB: A 1,000 metre wide corridor is typically required, but actual size will be dependent on local operational conditions.*
- 2.3. the above principle should be followed when approached by other seabed users who wish to install subsea plant or extract seabed material in the vicinity of an OOS Cable.
- 2.4. all cable recovery operations are planned to minimise future interference to other seabed users by leaving remaining cable, if possible, in no worse condition than it was prior to the recovery. This may be achieved by weighting the cable ends with clump weights or chains and lowering to the seabed on slip ropes while maintaining tension on the cable – attached diagram refers.

3. OOS CABLES - REMOVAL CONSIDERATIONS

Under UNCLOS and customary international law, there is no requirement for the removal of OOS Cables. If a coastal nation requires removal of undersea cables outside its territorial seas, cable owners should request the jurisdictional basis for such a requirement. In the absence of a valid jurisdictional basis, such a requirement is a violation of international law and may be challenged.

Because there is no international requirement, removal of OOS Cables beyond territorial seas is primarily a decision made by cable owners.

3.1. Pre-Decision Factors

Factors which cable owners should consider in deciding whether to remove an OOS Cable include the following:

- 3.1.1. Any potential effect on the safety of surface navigation or other uses of the sea including a comparison of whether removal is reasonable or realistic given the presence of other manmade objects on the seabed such as shipwrecks, debris, and oil and gas structures and installations.

- 3.1.2. Present and possible future effects on the marine environment. If the cable is composed of material that is inert or environmentally benign, consideration should be given to leaving the cable in place.
- 3.1.3. The risk that the cable will significantly shift position at some future time.
- 3.1.4. The costs and technical feasibility associated with removal of cables.
- 3.1.5. The determination of a new use or other reasonable justification for allowing the cable or parts thereof to remain on the sea-bed.
- 3.1.6. The comparative environmental impact of leaving the cable in place compared to the disruption caused by attempting to remove the cable.
- 3.1.7. The management of out-of-service cables as part of the cable protection program.
- 3.1.8. The potential socio-economic & economic benefits of recovering the cable.

3.2. Post-Decision Factors

If the decision is to retain a redundant cable for future use or to leave an out-of-service cable in place, cable owners should consider implementation of the following:

- 3.2.1. Notification to International & National charting authorities that the cable is no longer in service.
- 3.2.2. Notification to local fishermen and other seabed users of the change in status, and confirmation that any future claims for sacrificed gear will be considered on their merits.
- 3.2.3. Confirmation that the cable owner remains responsible to any party by insurance cover or otherwise for the OOS Cable.
- 3.2.4. Consideration of alternative uses for the cable such as donation to a scientific research body.

4. REFERENCES

Document Number	Title
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5. DEFINITIONS

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

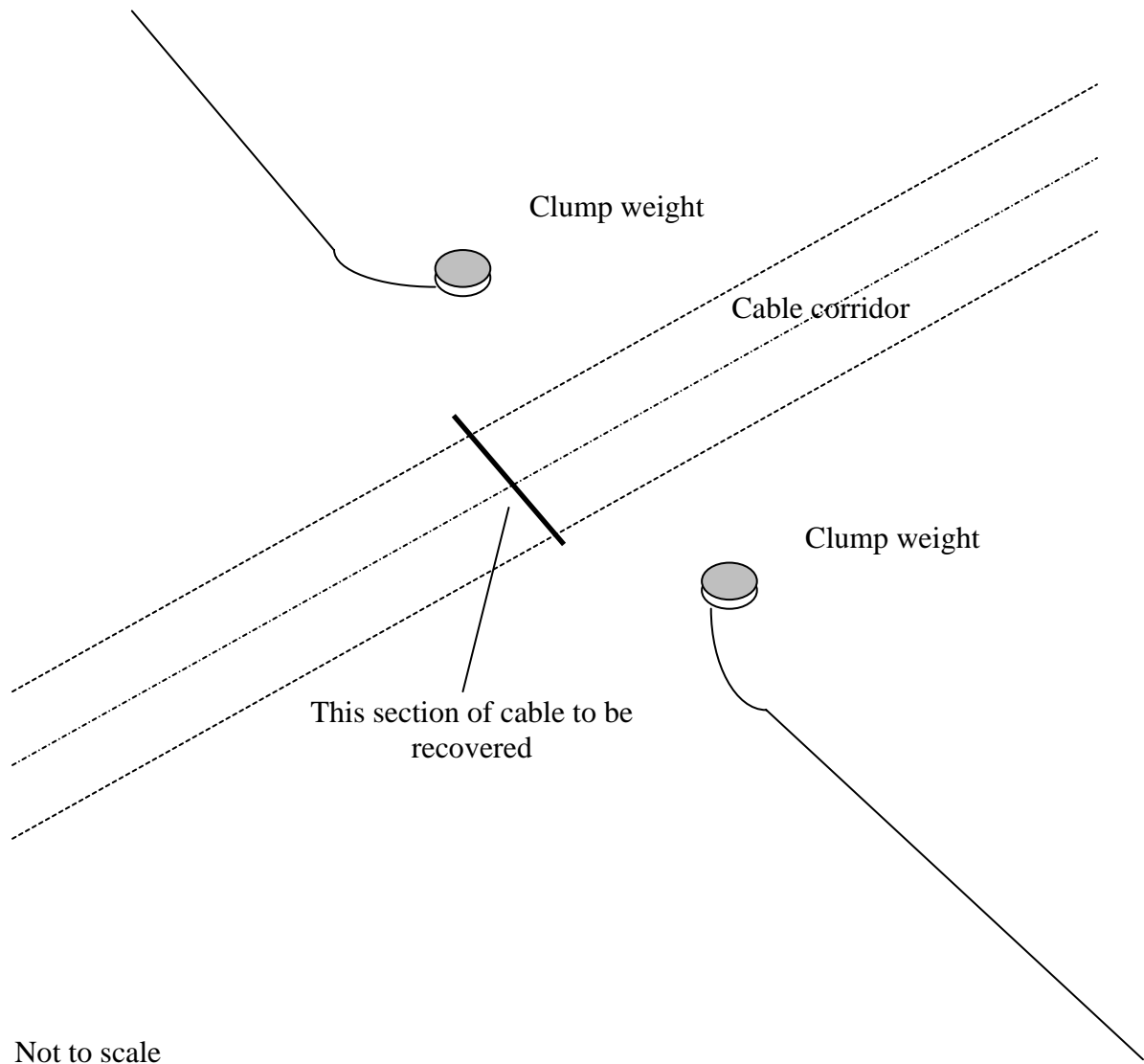
Term	Definition
Redundant Cable	The status whereby a submarine cable is temporarily not in service, prior to re-use or eventual decommissioning.
Out-of-Service	The status where a submarine cable is part of a decommissioned telecommunication or electrical transmission system and not required for future use as part of such a system.
UNCLOS	The United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (1982)

6. ATTACHMENTS

Document Number	Title
-	Diagram

DIAGRAM

Treatment of cable ends when recovering sections of out-of-service cables for pipeline or cable crossing.



The clump weights shall be concrete discs, typically 0.5 metres diameter by 0.2 metres thick, or other thin sectioned weights, alternatively chain may be used. The object of the weight is to minimise risk of fastening to fishing gear.