



ICPC Recommendation

Recommendation No. 8

**Procedure To Be Followed Whilst Offshore
Seismic Survey Work Is Undertaken In The
Vicinity Of Active Submarine Cable Systems.**

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

Contact for Enquiries and Proposed Changes

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document recommends the procedure to be followed whilst offshore seismic survey work is undertaken in the vicinity of active submarine cable systems where these are installed in water depths of 200 metres or less.

2. PROCEDURE FOR OFFSHORE SEISMIC SURVEY WORK

2.1 Prior to Work Commencing

- 2.1.1 The Seismic Survey Company (SSC) responsible for the survey work shall discuss their plans with the responsible cable Maintenance Authority (MA) in order to determine if there are any known issues that need to be taken into account prior to the SSC undertaking detailed planning of their seismic survey grid lines.
- 2.1.2 Offshore seismic survey work generally undertaken by the oil and gas industry involves the use of towed high powered airgun arrays to obtain deep sub-bottom profile data in their search for potential areas containing oil and gas deposits. The discharge of energy from a high powered airgun array is in effect an underwater explosion. As a consequence, there is a potential risk for damage to submerged plant items, such as repeaters, branching units and passive equaliser units, when an airgun array is operated within about 0.5 km of any of these items installed in water depths of 200 metres or less.
- 2.1.3 Where the planned seismic survey grid line passes within 0.5 km of submerged plant items the MA shall require the SSC to adjust the positions of the grid line so that at least 0.5 km separation is achieved.
- 2.1.4 The SSC shall work with the MA to accurately identify the physical location of the submerged plant items in the vicinity of the planned survey grid lines. The MA shall endeavour to contact the recognised government authorities to determine the possible presence of other cables which may be uncharted. The location of cables may be marked with buoys if applicable, subject to the MA approving a proposed methodology. Depending on the circumstances, this location work may require either divers or a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) to assist in the cable locating work. The cost of this location work is to the SSC's account.
- 2.1.5 The SSC and MA shall designate Project Coordinators (and deputies) for the duration of the work. All correspondence relating to the work shall be sent between these people. The designated staff need to be contactable, if required, 24 hrs per day.
- 2.1.6 When the planning of the survey grid lines has been completed, the SSC shall advise the MA Project Coordinator of the scope and timing of marine seismic survey activities planned to be undertaken within the vicinity of the cable(s).
- 2.1.7 Once the timing of the work is known, the MA or the NOC responsible for the cable system(s) shall provide timely advice to all cable owners and cable capacity users of the potentially hazardous work. The MA or the NOC shall ensure that all restoration plans are current for the cables affected by the seismic survey work.
- 2.1.8 The MA shall ensure the SSC is aware that the SSC will be liable for the direct (cable repair) and indirect (traffic restoration costs) of any cable repair operation

arising from the seismic survey work undertaken by the SSC or their sub-contractors. The MA shall ensure that the SSC arranges adequate insurance to cover this risk.

2.2 Immediately Prior to Work Commencing

2.2.1 The SSC Project Co-ordinator shall advise the MA Project Co-ordinator that work is about to commence and provide the MA Project Co-ordinator with an emergency contact number (usually of the work vessel undertaking the seismic survey work near the cables) in order to allow the MA Project Co-ordinator to immediately halt the work if required.

2.3 During the Work

2.3.1 The SSC Project Co-ordinator shall keep the MA Project Coordinator informed of the work progress and, in particular, any variations to the work plan previously notified/agreed.

2.3.2 At least 48 hours advance notice shall be given for any seismic survey operation undertaken in a region between 1km and 0.5 km of the submerged plant items in water depths of 200 metres or less. This will allow the MA Project Co-ordinator to arrange special monitoring of the cable system performance while the seismic survey work is being undertaken in a region between 1km and 0.5 km of the submerged plant items.

2.3.3 If deemed necessary, the MA shall provide (and the SSC shall allow) a MA representative to be on board the work vessel during the seismic survey work in order to oversee the operation and ensure that it follows the agreed plan.

2.4 After The Work Is Complete

2.4.1 The results of the seismic survey work may lead to offshore civil engineering work, at which time, the procedures in ICPC Recommendation No.7 shall apply.

3. REFERENCES

Document Number	Title
Recommendation No. 7	Procedure To Be Followed Whilst Offshore Civil Engineering Work Is Undertaken In The Vicinity Of Active Submarine Cable Systems.

4. DEFINITIONS

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

Term	Definition
SSC	Seismic Survey Company
MA	Maintenance Authority
ROV	Remotely Operated Vehicle

5. ATTACHMENTS

Document Number	Title
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