

Subsea Telecommunication Cables

Summary of Terms

As managers of the seabed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland we work in partnership with our customers and stakeholders to support the long-term sustainable use of the seabed.

Our management and leasing of the seabed includes granting rights for the laying, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of subsea telecommunication cables on The Crown Estate foreshore and seabed inside the territorial waters limit.

This is a summary of the terms of the rights we grant for subsea telecommunication cables and the rents we charge.

We welcome engagement with operators during the early planning phases of subsea telecommunication cable projects; for further information please contact Alice Ramsay (Subsea.Telecommunications@thecrownestate.co.uk).

New leases

The Crown Estate has a standard lease upon which terms are granted.

Rights

Operators are granted the right to undertake surveys, route clearance activities and subsequently to install, operate, maintain and decommission the cable within an agreed area.

Subsequent potential seabed infrastructure operators must obtain the consent of operators to carry out works within a protection zone.

We seek to work with operators to help finalise cable routes alongside other infrastructure – both existing and planned.

Table 1 (below) summarises the spatial extent of the rights.

Rents

Our standard rent for all new International Cablesⁱ is set out in Table 2 (below).

Domestic cablesⁱⁱ, Transiting cablesⁱⁱⁱ and cables to the Channel Islands and Isle of Man are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Rent Review

Rents are subject to upwards only rent reviews. These will be held annually, in line with the Retail Prices Index, and 5 yearly, by way of an open market review.

We anticipate next reviewing our standard rent in 2025, but reserve the right to do so earlier.

Decommissioning

We require cable specifications and a decommissioning plan before rights are granted. Before cables are decommissioned, the decommissioning plan will be finalised between us and the operator.

Security

We may require security in the form of guarantees or other approved security to ensure that operators are able to comply with their obligations.

Existing Leases

Any changes to the terms of our standard lease do not apply retrospectively to existing agreements.

Updating

Our standard lease is updated from time to time to reflect changes in law, the market and to ensure that we take into account requirements of industry.

These terms are provided to assist operators in planning future infrastructure and are not intended to create any legally binding obligations. They are subject to contract and completion of formally executed legal documents.

Table 1. The spatial extent of rights for subsea telecommunication cables on The Crown Estate foreshore and seabed inside the territorial sea limit.

Area to lay the cable	The corridor (normally 30m in width) within which the cable will be laid.
Protection Areas:	For infrastructure works: The area extending to 235m (for water depths of ≤55m) or 485m (for water depths of >55m) either side of (and including) the 30m wide cable corridor.
	For dredging: The area extending to 235m on either side of (and including) the 30m cable corridor.

Table 2. The rents for international subsea telecommunication cables.

	From	To	Rent to be charged for new leases as from 1 st January 2020
Non-Operational rent	Commencement of the lease	Operational Date, which is the earlier of the date the cable becomes operational and the anticipated date for operation (agreed between us and the Operator)	30% of the Operational rent
Operational rent	Operational Date (see definition above)	Expiry/termination of the lease	£200,000 (this will be subject to indexation to relevant commencement date)

ⁱ 'International' - submarine cables which make landfall in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and which exit the UK territorial waters limit with an international destination.

ⁱⁱ 'Domestic' - submarine cables which both start and terminate in the UK.

ⁱⁱⁱ 'Transiting' - submarine cables which pass through the territorial waters limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland but do not make landfall.