

GUIDELINES ON DEPLOYMENT OF SUBMARINE CABLES INTO SINGAPORE

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Info-communications Media Development Authority (the “Authority”) is the lead agency for facilitating the deployment of submarine cable systems into Singapore. The Authority provides guidance to interested parties and facilitates the process for applying for the necessary permits from various authorities.
- 1.2 As of February 2026, new submarine cables are landing at the following designated landing sites: Changi Site 1A, Tuas West and Tuas South. All submarine cable systems can only be deployed to their designated landing sites.
- 1.3 This set of Guidelines is intended to provide an overview of the process for obtaining the necessary approvals and permits for the deployment of submarine cables into Singapore and to guide the interested parties on the process. There are four key steps that an interested party has to go through to land a submarine cable system in Singapore:
 - a) Application to the Authority for a Facilities-Based Operations (FBO) licence or to amend an existing FBO licence to deploy the submarine cable system into Singapore;
 - b) Application to the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and relevant government agencies for environmental impact assessment and land use consultation exercises to obtain land use approval;
 - c) Application to the Maritime & Port Authority (MPA)’s Committee for Marine Projects (COMET) for the proposed marine works; and
 - d) Application to relevant government agencies for the Temporary Occupational Licence.

2 APPLICATION TO THE AUTHORITY FOR AN FBO LICENCE / AMENDMENT OF EXISTING FBO LICENCE

- 2.1 The first step for applicants interested to land a new submarine cable system into Singapore is to apply to the Authority for an FBO licence, if it does not already hold such a licence. A copy of the application guidelines can be downloaded from the Authority’s [website](#).
- 2.2 To apply for the FBO licence, the applicant is required to submit a cable landing proposal to the Authority that includes a detailed description of the new cable system, the business plans and details of proposed deployment route and landing site. At this stage, the detailed cable route is not necessary but the applicant is welcomed to provide such information if ready. The applicant only needs to provide such details when submitting approval requests to relevant agencies subsequently (detailed in the following sections below).

- 2.3 As for applicants who already hold an FBO licence from the Authority, they will have to write in to seek the Authority's approval to amend the FBO licence to include details of the proposed submarine cable system as well as the associated services.
- 2.4 In general, the Authority's assessment for the new submarine cable deployment is based on the following considerations:
- a) Financial and technical viability of the project
 - b) Proposed services and benefits that the new submarine cable system will bring to the info-communications industry, consumers and the economy in Singapore;
 - c) Efficient usage of land resources and sea corridor in the submarine cable deployment. Applicants are to plan for the deployment of spare stub cables together with the new submarine cable system to cater for the future expansion of new submarine cable routes. The Authority looks favourably on new methods of cable deployment that can result in more efficient use of land resources and sea corridors; and
 - d) Commitments of the applicant in fulfilling its plans.
- 2.5 The Authority generally takes up to four (4) weeks to assess a request for a new FBO licence/licence amendment upon submission of all information required for assessment. A longer timeline may be required if the applicant is unable to provide the required information to the Authority for the application. If the proposed submarine cable landing is approved, the Authority will award the FBO licence or amend the existing FBO licence.
- 2.6 For any enquiries regarding the application of an FBO licence for the deployment of submarine cable systems, please contact:

*Info-communications Media Development Authority
Market Policy & Regulation
10 Pasir Panjang Road
#12-01 Mapletree Business City
Singapore 117438
Email: ilo@imda.gov.sg*

3 APPLICATION TO URA AND RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND LAND USE CONSULTATION EXERCISES TO OBTAIN LAND USE APPROVAL

- 3.1 Upon the Authority's approval of the proposed submarine cable landing, the next step for the applicant is to obtain the land use approval from URA for the proposed submarine cable system (including individual landing sites and cables). The Authority will facilitate the (i) consultation and clearance with relevant agencies and (ii) Environmental Impact Assessment on behalf of the applicant. While the Authority has pre-planned the locations of the landing sites and marine routes with these agencies to facilitate the land use approvals, these processes are to ensure

that considerations, such as the impact on the land use, environment, marine traffic, safety, pollution control, etc. are addressed.

(i) Consultation and Clearance with Relevant Agencies

3.2 The applicant will need to provide the following documents to the Authority for consultation with relevant agencies on the applicant's behalf:

a) Detailed description of proposal and proposed works; technical drawings and cadastral plans showing full scope of cable laying works, including both land and sea routes; electrode requirements; trenching works or cable ducts in relation to existing submarine cables within the sea corridor, sea wall and surrounding uses and features; work sites; exact location of the beach manhole; and connection to the nearest road/common duct network and landing station or data centre.¹

3.3 The consultation and clearance by relevant agencies generally take about six (6) months. In the assessment of the proposal, agencies will take into consideration the following, amongst other factors:

a) The sea and land route of the submarine cable system;

b) The impact of the submarine cable system on existing and future developments; and

c) The potential impact to the environment as a result of the proposed cable deployment; and whether the applicant has considered and is ready to put in place measures to minimise any potential environmental impact as per section 3.5 below.

(ii) Environmental Impact Assessment

3.4 As submarine cable landings are in marine or coastal areas and may have potential environmental and transboundary impact, the applicant may need to carry out environmental consultations with relevant Technical Agencies (TAs)², as well as the URA and Ministry of National Development (MND) to determine whether an environmental impact assessment is required. The environmental consultation takes approximately four (4) weeks, not including additional time required for any further clarifications. More time may be required if further environmental studies and engagements are assessed to be necessary arising from the consultation. This could be done concurrently with (i) consultation and clearance with relevant agencies in sections 3.2 and 3.3.

¹ The files are to be in GIS-/CAD-/BIM-compatible formats and geo-referenced to the SVY21 map coordinate system. For the submission to Singapore Land Authority (SLA), the plan should be in SHP/DWG format and show the cable alignment and associated infrastructure edged in red and drawn as a polygon feature.

² Technical agencies (TAs) include the National Environment Agency (NEA), MPA, National Parks Board (NParks) and Singapore Food Agency (SFA).

- 3.5 The applicant will need to provide the following information via the [Environment Protection Management System \(EPMS\)](#) to the best of their knowledge to the Authority, for submission to relevant TAs and URA/MND:
- a) Description of submarine cable proposal and works involved, relevant site plans, project timeline, potential environmental impact (local, transboundary, terrestrial, marine), measures that would be put in place to minimise the environmental impact, public engagement plan, etc.
- 3.6 Based on the information provided, TAs and URA/MND will evaluate the need for, and the scope and scale of further environmental studies, stakeholder engagement, and will stipulate the mitigating measures and environmental monitoring and management programmes to be put in place by the submarine cable system proposal to minimise the environmental impact of their development.
- 3.7 Upon completing (i) the consultation and clearance with relevant agencies, and (ii) the environmental consultations (and environmental impact assessment, if required), the Authority will inform the applicant of the status of the land use approval in about five (5) weeks.

4 APPLICATION TO MPA'S COMET FOR THE PROPOSED MARINE WORKS

- 4.1 The applicant will need to apply to the MPA's COMET for its proposed marine works. The submission shall include details on the route leading to the landing location assigned by IMDA, the desktop study from the route survey, timeframe for the intended works, working area needed along the proposed cable route and craft deployed and work method statement of the marine works involved. Details for the submission to COMET can be found at the following website:

<https://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/operations/marine-projects/foreshore-and-marine-development-projects>

- 4.2 The COMET generally takes approximately three (3) weeks to evaluate and reply to the application. After the COMET issues In Principal No Objection (IPNO), including any conditions, the applicant can proceed to submit the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for marine works and apply for a Port Marine Notice (if applicable) as per the information provided in the COMET conditions. The applicant has to obtain URA's land use approval as described in section 3 before the commencement of any works related to the submarine cable.

5 APPLICATION TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR TEMPORARY OCCUPATION LICENCE

(i) Deployment of Submarine Cable in State Land/Seabed

- 5.1 The applicant is required to apply to Singapore Land Authority (SLA) for a Temporary Occupation Licence (TOL) for the use of State land/seabed for the deployment of the submarine cable systems to Singapore. For avoidance of doubt, State land/seabed extends all the way to Singapore's port limit. The applicant can apply for a TOL at <https://app.sla.gov.sg/TOL> by logging in under "Businesses and

other corporate entities". As part of the application, the applicant must submit all supporting documents including a cadastral plan with the boundary of the proposed cable route and ancillary items (e.g., beach manhole, electrodes, etc) within State land/seabed clearly shown and all clearances (inclusive of copies of licences) from the relevant authorities such as URA, MPA, Land Transport Authority (LTA), NParks, Public Utilities Board (PUB), National Environment Agency (NEA), etc.

- 5.2 Upon the receipt of the TOL application with all the necessary supporting documents and clearances from the relevant authorities, the normal processing time for the TOL application is thirty (30) working days. During the processing, the applicant is not allowed to enter and use the State land/seabed.
- 5.3 If the application is approved, an offer letter will be sent to the applicant. The applicant will be required to make an upfront payment of around three months' TOL fee and GST, provide a security deposit (in the form of cash, or a guarantee issued by a participating financial institution under the eGuarantee@Gov programme), and submit a completed GIRO application form for acceptance of the offer. The payment of subsequent monthly TOL fee must be made through Interbank GIRO. The applicant can only enter and use the site for the deployment of the submarine cable system upon their acceptance of the offer and from the commencement date of the TOL.
- 5.4 For any enquires regarding the application for a TOL for the use of State land/seabed for the deployment of the submarine cable system to Singapore, you may contact SLA Tenancy And Licence Management via sla_enquiry@sla.gov.sg.

(ii) Deployment of Submarine Cables in Parklands

- 5.5 For the use of parks for the deployment of the submarine cable systems in Singapore, the applicant will be required to apply for a TOL from NParks. The applicant can submit the application to NPARKS_Registry@nparks.gov.sg with the following documents:
 - a) A copy of the applicant's certificate of registration or proof of incorporation.
 - b) A cadastral or a survey plan indicating the location and dimensions of the proposed TOL site.
 - c) A map indicating the location and dimensions of the proposed TOL site.
 - d) A copy of the proposed site lay out plan, a copy of the project terms and conditions and/or IMDA's approval letter for deploying the cable in Singapore.
- 5.6 If the application is approved, NParks will issue a letter with the details of the TOL, including:
 - a) The TOL fee and security deposit payable and the respective mode of payments. The applicant will be required to submit the Direct Debit Authorization Form, should you be required to make payment of monthly TOL fee through interbank GIRO;

- b) The types of insurance the applicant is required to purchase, if any. Please note that all insurance policies are to be in the name of the Government of the Republic of Singapore c/o National Parks Board and valid for the entire duration of the TOL period. The applicant will be required to submit all insurance policies to NParks; and
 - c) Other terms and conditions that the applicant will be subjected to.
- 5.7 Applicants are advised to submit the application at least one (1) month before the commencement date of the TOL to allow time for the application to be reviewed.
- 5.8 For any enquiries regarding the TOL applications for the use of parks for the deployment of the submarine cable system deployment in Singapore, you may contact NParks' via their [online feedback form](#).