



Submarine Cables: The Handbook of Law and Policy

By Douglas R. Burnett

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Submarine fiber optic cables are critical communications infrastructure for States around the world. They are laid on the seabed, are often no bigger than a garden hose, and transmit immense amounts of data across oceans. These cables are the backbone of the internet and phone services and underpin core State interests, such as the finance sector, shipping, commerce and banking industries. Without the capacity to transmit and receive data via submarine cables, the economic security of States would be severely compromised. Despite the fact that 95 per cent of all data and telecommunications between States are transmitted via submarine cables, there is little understanding of how these cables operate. As a result some States have developed policies and laws that undermine the integrity of international telecommunications systems. Submarine Cables: The Handbook of Law and Policy provides a one-stop-shop of essential information relating to the international governance of submarine cables. The Handbook is a unique collaboration between international lawyers and experts from the submarine cable industry. It provides a practical insight into the law and policy issues that affect the protection of submarine cables, as well as the laying, maintenance and operation of such cables. In addition, the law and policy issues in relation to other special purpose cables, such as power cables, marine scientific research cables, military cables, and offshore energy cables, are also addressed.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The handbook is a pioneering effort and serves as a one-stop resource for all issues related to the international governance of submarine cables." -David O'Connell, *Naval War College Review*

About the Author

Douglas R. Burnett is a partner maritime practice group at the law firm Squire Sanders (US) LLP. Since 1999 he has been the International law advisor to the International Cable Committee (ICPC). He has worked with various aspects of submarine cables for over 32 years. He has been a lecturer on several occasions at the Rhodes Academy and is currently the Chairman of the International Law of the Sea Sub-committee of the Maritime Law Association of the United States. He holds the rank of Captain, U.S. Navy (ret.) Professor Robert Beckman is the Director of Centre for International Law (CIL), a university-wide research centre at the National University of Singapore (NUS). In addition to serving as Director of CIL, he also heads its Ocean Law and Policy programme. Professor Beckman received his JD from the University of Wisconsin and his LLM from Harvard Law School. He is an Associate Professor at the NUS Faculty of Law, where he has taught for more than 30 years. He currently teaches Ocean Law and Policy in Asia, Public International Law and International Regulation of Shipping. He is also co-director of the Rhodes Academy of Oceans Law and Policy and lectures there every summer. Tara Davenport is a Research Fellow at the Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore. Tara holds a Bachelor of Laws from the London School of Economics and a Masters of Law in Maritime Law from the National University of Singapore. She is a qualified lawyer in Singapore and has spent a large part of her career working as a lawyer in one of Singapore's top shipping law firms. As a Research Fellow Tara undertakes research in the area of Ocean Law and Policy, with a particular emphasis on maritime crimes, submarine cables, joint development, and the South China Sea. Tara was the winner of the inaugural Rhodes Academy Submarine Cables Award sponsored by International Cable Protection Committee in 2010 for her paper Submarine Cables: Problems in Law and Practice.

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