



# **Working Group 8: Submarine Cable Routing and Landing Working Group**

## **Status Update**

September 12, 2013

Kent Bressie (North American Submarine  
Cable Association/Wiltshire & Grannis LLP), Chair

# WG8 Objectives

## **Description:**

- WG8 will examine factors that encourage clustering of submarine cables and cable landing facilities, as well as siting of other marine infrastructure in close proximity to submarine cables, all of which increases risks of cable damage and harm to U.S. network resilience.

## **Deliverables:**

- WG8 will recommend industry practices, government policies, and interagency coordination mechanisms to promote a more resilient submarine cable infrastructure.



# WG8 Deliverables

- WG8 will develop best practices and recommendations on the appropriate separation distance between existing or planned undersea cables and other objects on the seabed floor that could adversely impact those cables and cause communications disruption.
- WG8 will produce two separate reports:
  - The first report will recommend standards for separation distances between submarine cables and other offshore activities/infrastructure and interagency coordination mechanisms for offshore permitting.
  - The second report will address industry best practices and government policies for promoting geographic diversity of submarine cable landings.



# WG8 Members

Steve Balk (Sprint)

Seth Davis (FTI, for Pacific Crossing Ltd.)\*

Kurt Johnson (Pacific Crossing Ltd.)

Alice Lippert (U.S. Department of Energy)

Nick Lordi (Applied Communication Sciences)

Ann Miles (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission)

John Mariano (David Ross Group)

Frank Salley (Verizon)

Nikki Shone (Southern Cross)

Alland Sy or Steve Schwartz (Goldman Sachs)

Gerald Tourgee (North American Submarine Cable Association)

Robert Wargo (AT&T)

Others pending

\* Also a CSRIC member



# Background: WG8 new to CSRIC

- WG8 is an entirely new WG for CSRIC IV.
- Recent conflicts between installed and planned submarine cables and other marine projects (including energy facilities and dredging projects) have highlighted the need for industry best practices, government policies, and interagency coordination mechanisms to ensure resilience of U.S. submarine cable infrastructure.



# The Core Problem: Marine and Shore-End Spatial Conflicts Threaten U.S. Network Resiliency

- The clustering in close geographic proximity of submarine cables and cable landing facilities, and the proximity of submarine cables to other marine infrastructure and activity, increases the risk that a single external event—whether snagged fishing gear, a dragged vessel anchor, an earthquake, or a terrorist attack—could damage multiple submarine cables and severely disrupt U.S. connectivity.
- Such disruptions would harm U.S. economic and security interests, as submarine cables provide more than 95 percent of U.S. international connectivity and significant domestic connectivity for Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Seabed topography, existing and planned offshore infrastructure (particularly alternative energy facilities), the availability of terrestrial backhaul networks, and permitting costs and delays for new cable landing facilities all encourage clustering of cables and landings.



# WG8 Status

- WG8 has assembled a team of 12 members, representing diverse interests including submarine cable operators, cable system customers, marine services consultants, and regulators for other marine infrastructure, all with subject matter expertise to accomplish WG8's objectives.
- WG8 is currently working to confirm additional members to ensure sufficient breadth of interests and expertise.



# WG8 Approach

- WG8 will:
  - Identify relevant marine and permitting activities;
  - Identify potential conflicts and risks;
  - Review and assess existing standards and recommendations from various jurisdictions; and
  - Review and assess case studies and models for interagency coordination.
  - Identify obstacles to new and diverse cable landings.
- As WG8 members are geographically dispersed, WG8 will work primarily by conference call/email.





# WG8 Schedule

- Bi-weekly conference calls with members
- Submission of Draft WG8 Report 1 - TBD
- June 2014: submission of Draft WG8 Report 2
- Submission of Final WG8 Report 1 - TBD
- March 2015: submission of Final WG8 Report 2



# Next Steps

- Finalize WG8 membership
- Develop a work plan to accomplish the CSRIC IV charge taking advantage of WG8 members' subject matter expertise
- Seek WG8 volunteers to lead aspects of the work plan
- Continue bi-weekly conference calls
- Provide periodic status updates to Steering Committee and Council

