



Media Statement

25 February 2016

Basslink interconnector update

Basslink has progressed with its fault location phase and continues to work around the clock to return the interconnector to operational status.

According to current data, the cable fault does not appear to be the most common form of cable fault caused by external impact to the cable. From current observations, there does not appear to be any visible damage to the external surface of the cable, which is also uncommon.

Basslink continues to consult with a wide range of international cable experts who are working on the vessel, on site at either end of the subsea cable and abroad to analyse data from the testing, which has progressed from 'fault pre-location' tests to 'fault pinpointing' tests. That is, from ascertaining the distance to the fault to determining the exact location of the fault on the 300km cable, which has involved additional dredging and visual identification of the cable features.

We have used best endeavours, however the fault location has not been narrowed down to such an extent that a decision can be made to cut the cable and commence the repair phase of operations.

In the meantime, Basslink continues to update its key stakeholders, Hydro Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government, of the repair activities on a regular basis. A Hydro Tasmania observer appointed by the State continues to be present on the *Ile de Re* at all times when at sea.

While Basslink appreciates and shares the urgency and desire of everyone to have the interconnector operational, the overwhelming advice from its experts is that there must be a greater level of certainty on the fault location, based on a sufficiently narrow and defined area, before cutting the cable.

The consequences of poor fault location are significant and would only further delay the return to operation of the interconnector. This has been a key learning from other submarine cable faults around the world.

The team continues to work on narrowing down the fault location having been forced to postpone a range of tests due to poor weather conditions, which were scheduled to commence on Monday 15 February.

Owing to poor weather in Bass Strait, the *Ile de Re* returned to the Port of Geelong for three days last week (15 to 18 February). During this period, the vessel was refueled and restocked, while shore based tests such as Line Impedance Resonance Analysis (LIRA) tests were able to continue as part of fault location.

- More -



Basslink is continuing to work on determining the fault location. However, two days of bad weather are expected to commence tonight.

Basslink will provide an updated timeline for return to service at such a time that a decision has been made to cut the cable.

- Ends -

For further media enquiries on Basslink, please contact:

Matthew Mahon, Royce, 03 8628 9300 or 0413 101 860 matthew@royce.com.au

Yumeko Leung, Royce, 03 8628 9319 or 0402 127 903 yumeko@royce.com.au

About Basslink www.basslink.com.au

The Basslink Interconnector enhances security of supply on both sides of Bass Strait; protecting Tasmania against the risk of drought-constrained energy shortages while providing Victoria and southern states with secure renewable energy during times of peak demand. The Basslink Interconnector is the world's second longest undersea electricity cable. Owned by Keppel Infrastructure Trust, Basslink delivers excellence in the areas of safety, reliability and performance.

Basslink has a number of fibre optic assets which carry high speed telecommunication traffic. Basslink Telecoms offers a range of wholesale transmission services between Tasmania and Victoria.