



# Media Statement

22 April 2016

## Basslink completes first joint

Basslink's cable repair vessel, the *Ile de Re*, is returning to Geelong having successfully completed the first of three jointing exercises.

"We are very pleased to report that the first joint has been completed, with 1355m of new cable laid on the seabed," said Basslink CEO Malcolm Eccles. "The works went well, and we are on track for return to service in June as previously advised.

"The process was highly technical, and involved jointing a new length to the main high voltage cable, the metallic return cable and the fibre optic cable, before bundling them together to be laid as a single cable."

"The next phase of the operations will be the final major mobilisation, which will include the loading of a 90-tonne reel of high voltage cable, amongst other procedures to equip the vessel. After the mobilisation, which is expected to take five days, we plan to return to the fault location, where we will complete the final two joints and lay the remaining cable and bight\*," said Mr Eccles.

As the jointing works take place on the deck of the vessel and are highly susceptible to weather conditions, each joint will require a window of relatively calm sea conditions and clear weather for six continuous days to allow such works to be completed safely. Bad weather or rough sea state can damage the cable, result in abortive jointing works or pose unnecessary occupational, health and safety risks for the repair crew.

Once all three joints have been completed, Basslink will lay the cable back in the existing trench where possible, and natural seabed movement will bury the cable over the coming months. Where this is not possible, Basslink will use a jetting process to excavate the seabed under the cable, after which it will sink into the sediment.

Every effort is being made to return the interconnector to service as soon as possible, and Basslink has advised key stakeholders to prepare for a mid-June return to service date, to take into account likely contingencies such as poor weather and sea conditions.

Basslink continues to update its key stakeholders, Hydro Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government, of the repair activities on a regular basis.

*\* The bight is the loop of extra cable that is required to allow the jointing works to be conducted on the surface. It is anticipated that this will be approximately 240m, or three times water depth.*



- Ends -

**For further media enquiries on Basslink, please contact:**

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**About Basslink** [www.basslink.com.au](http://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.