



Commonwealth Fact Sheet



SCHEDULE 3A TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT 1997

Permits are required to install certain submarine cables and to undertake activities where protected submarine cables or pipelines exist.

1. What approvals do I need?

A telecommunications carrier may apply to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) for a permit to install one or more submarine cables in Australian waters. All international cables (cables in a protection zone and cables in Australian waters that are not in a protection zone or coastal waters) require a permit to be installed in Australian waters. A permit is only required for a domestic cable if the cable is to be installed in a protection zone.

The ACMA grants permits for:

- All submarine cables that are proposed for installation in a protection zone.
- All international submarine cables that are connected to a place in Australia.

Cables that are installed outside a protection zone are subject to applicable State and Territory laws.

2. Protection zones

Activities within protection zones ([NSW](#) and [Perth](#)) that are likely to damage cables are either prohibited or restricted. In all three protection zones – Northern Sydney, Southern Sydney and Perth – the exploration for, or exploitation of resources (such as petroleum and minerals in the sea or on or under the seabed) must not occur unless [certain conditions](#) are met.

More information on protection zones can be found on the ACMA [website](#).

3. Who provides approvals?

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) regulates the installation and protection of submarine cables under *Schedule 3A to the Telecommunications Act 1997*.

4. How do I get Commonwealth approval?

Guidelines and application forms for submarine cable installation permits are available from the ACMA [website](#).

Permits are valid for 18 months and can be extended in 180 day increments.

5. More Information

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For more information on submarine cabling and protection zones, visit the ACMA [website](#) or contact:

Phone: 1300 850 115

Email: subcablesenquiries@acma.gov.au

Major Projects Facilitation Agency

If you would like assistance to identify the regulatory obligations for your project, please visit our [Online Tool](#) or contact us:

Email: mpfa@industry.gov.au