

# 2AFRICA/GERA (East) Submarine fibre optics cable system to be landed at Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Our Ref:



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: [info@sahra.org.za](mailto:info@sahra.org.za)  
South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001  
[www.sahra.org.za](http://www.sahra.org.za)

Enquiries: Briege Williams  
Tel: 021 462 4502  
Email: [bwilliams@sahra.org.za](mailto:bwilliams@sahra.org.za)  
CaseID: 15813

Date: Thursday April 29, 2021  
Page No: 1

## Interim Comment

### In terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: VODACOM (PTY) LTD

VODACOM SITE /NO: 6 KWAMBUZI NONGOMA 3880

### Proposed 2AFRICA/GERA (East) submarine fibre optics cable system to be landed at Summerstrand, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Eastern Cape

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) would like to thank you for submitting the Final Scoping Report (FSR) for the proposed 2AFRICA/GERA (East) submarine fibre optics cable system to be landed at Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

As part of the Environmental Authorisation process a Scoping Report and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) must be completed. The FSR has identified that a Heritage Assessment is to be undertaken as part of the process, and SAHRA supports this.

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999 (NHRA), Sections 2 and 35 stipulates that any wreck, being any vessel or aircraft or any part thereof older than 60 years old lying in South Africa's territorial waters or maritime cultural zone is protected and falls under the jurisdiction of SAHRA's Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit. These heritage sites or objects may not be disturbed without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority.

The proposed cable runs to the south of Algoa Bay which is historically an area which has seen a high volume of maritime traffic and casualties. There are a number of vessels which are recorded as lying along the route of the proposed cable though it must be noted that the co-ordinates for the wrecks may not be accurate.

On the approach to the proposed landing site, the cable runs close to Despatch or Roman Rock. There are two vessels listed as lying close to these rocks; the Balaclava which wrecked on the rocks in 1867, and the Haerlem which was scuttled in 1987.

Just north of the cable landing site, closer to the harbour mouth lies the Paris Maru, a fishing vessel which

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wrecked in 1934. To the south of the landing site is Cape Recife which has seen an estimated 16 vessels wrecked in the vicinity around the point. The approximate positions of some of these vessels are known but some are just recorded as wrecking in the general area of the cape.

There are also numerous wrecks further out in deeper waters, some of which were casualties of German U-boats during the Second World War. The locations of these wrecks are approximate positions but as they are considered war graves their possible presence and cultural heritage significance should be highlighted during any heritage assessments.

Due to the possibility that heritage resources may be present along the proposed route of the cable, the heritage assessment must include a specialist study of maritime heritage to be undertaken by a suitably qualified Maritime Archaeologist.

SAHRA is pleased to note that the amendment to Section 3.1.5 that was requested in the previous comment on the Draft Scoping Report has been accepted and updated in the FSR.

Section 8.6 indicates that survey data for the alignment of the subsea cable will be provided to the heritage specialist for review, this is supported by SAHRA as it is an important aid to inform the specialist report.

The applicant is advised that a comment on possible terrestrial heritage impacts from the relevant Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (PHRA) must be obtained in addition to this comment.

All correspondence and reports relating to this project must be uploaded to the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) to provide SAHRA with the opportunity to comment. SAHRA does not accept hard copy documents, links to documents, or documents received via post.

Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

Yours faithfully

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Briege Williams  
Heritage Officer  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Lesla la Grange  
Manager: Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

**ADMIN:**

Direct URL to case: <https://sahrissahra.org.za/node/546467>

**Terms & Conditions:**

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for proposed work.
2. If any heritage resources, including graves or human remains, are encountered they must be reported to SAHRA immediately.
3. SAHRA reserves the right to request additional information as required.