

Our Ref:



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001
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Enquiries: Lesa la Grange
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CaseID: 13412

Date: Tuesday February 05, 2019
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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Mr Mervin Chetty
Liquid Telecom

METISS is a proposed new subsea fibre optic cable system that will connect Mauritius to South Africa and provide high-speed connectivity of 24 terabytes per second to the global telecommunications network and low latency access to enhance business operations across multiple industries.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) thanks the applicant for providing the Draft Scoping Report (DSR) for comment.

The applicant proposes to install a new subsea fibre optic cable connecting Mauritius to South Africa. The cable will run approximately 538 km (inclusive of Territorial Waters and Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ)). The system includes a 14 mm to 35 mm diameter subsea cable that will enter the South African EEZ (approximately 370 km from the seashore) and continue through Territorial Waters (approximately 22 km from the seashore), to a landing site at Amanzimtoti Pipeline Beach in KwaZulu-Natal.

This activity requires statutory comment from SAHRA in terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999 (the "NHRA").

SAHRA notes that the applicant has identified the need for a Maritime and Underwater Heritage Impact Assessment (MUCHIA), as referred to on Page 9 of the DSR, and supports the need for this specialist study.

- Please replace the term "Marine Heritage" with "Maritime Heritage" throughout the document
- The Heritage Impact Assessment referred to on Page 112 must also note the potential for the presence of heritage resources at the cable landing site, assess the potential impact, and make recommendations for mitigation where applicable.
- The HIA must be submitted to SAHRA via the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) for comment.
- All efforts must be made to avoid damage and/or disturbance of cultural heritage material along the offshore cable routes.
- Should any shipwreck or cultural heritage material be detected below the high water mark via sidescan

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sonar or other means, the position must be recorded and SAHRA must be notified immediately. In this event, work must cease and may not commence until feedback has been received from SAHRA.

- If shipwreck or cultural heritage material is detected along the offshore alignment is proven or suspected to be older than 60 years, and the applicant is unable to alter the alignment, a permit shall be required from SAHRA before work may commence.
- SAHRA must be provided with information regarding any wrecks or anomalies found on or within 200m of the offshore alignment. Specifically, the name of the vessel (if known), any associated chronological data, and the sources for this information must be provided.
- Page 101 - Please add a paragraph to Section 6.7.12 which summarises the remit of the South African Heritage Resources Agency in relation to the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (Amafa KZN) - e.g. "SAHRA is responsible for maritime and underwater heritage resources, including those located on land and within 24 nautical miles seaward of the high-water mark."

SAHRA particularly supports the following statement in the DSR:

P. 103 - "Sidescan Sonar Data will be used to identify any wrecks within the vicinity of the proposed cable prior to installation. The subsea cable route will be designed to avoid any known or identified wrecks."

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

Yours faithfully

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

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ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/520560>

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.