



MEASURES ENFORCED IN TAIWAN TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO CRITICAL UNDERSEA INFRASTRUCTURE

The Club has become aware of recent changes to the deterrence and enforcement measures enforced in Taiwan to prevent damage to critical undersea infrastructure.

Following several occurrences of damage to subsea cables within their waters, the Taiwanese government has made some [legislative amendments](#) with the aim of strengthening the protection of critical infrastructure and enhancing deterrence.

The "Seven Subsea Cable Laws" amendments (covering the Telecommunications Management Act, Electricity Act, Natural Gas Enterprise Act, Water Supply Act, Meteorological Act, Commercial Port Act, and Ship Act) introduce the following key measures:

INCREASED CRIMINAL PENALTIES

Intentional damage to subsea cables, energy infrastructure, or water pipelines is punishable by up to seven years' imprisonment and fines of up to TWD 10million.

INTRODUCTION OF NEGLIGENCE LIABILITY

Penalties of up to six months' imprisonment, short-term detention, or a fine of up to TWD 2million now apply to negligent damage to subsea cables, preventing offenders from avoiding liability by claiming the act was accidental.

CONFISCATION OF INSTRUMENTALITIES

Vessels and equipment used in committing damage may be confiscated, regardless of ownership.

MANDATORY VESSEL MONITORING

Ships are required to keep their AIS activated in designated maritime areas. Non-compliance may result in detention or fines.

STRICTER CONTROL OF IRREGULAR PORT STAYS

Authorities are empowered to order ships that loiter without justification or anchor within subsea cable zones to depart, or to confiscate them where appropriate.



By way of example, recent amendments to [Article 71-1 of the Electricity Act](#) came into force on 5 January 2026. Under the newly added Paragraph 4, negligent conduct endangering the normal functioning of subsea power cables constitutes a criminal offence. A person who negligently damages or interferes with such infrastructure may face imprisonment for up to six months, short-term detention, or a criminal fine of up to TWD 2million.

These amendments mirror the regulatory approach under the Telecommunications Management Act (“TMA”) (effective since 2019). Under [Article 72\(4\) of the TMA](#), negligent acts affecting subsea cable infrastructure, including landing stations, connecting cables, domestic marine transmission and switching facilities, international gateways, and satellite communication centres, may likewise give rise to criminal liability, with similar penalties.

In essence, the key distinction between the two regimes is that the Electricity Act governs subsea power cables, while the TMA applies to subsea telecommunications cables.

Prior to these amendments, incidents involving vessel-related damage to subsea cables were typically treated as civil matters (e.g. claims for property damage and consequential losses), and criminal liability for negligence was rarely pursued. Following the amendments, however, such incidents may now give rise to criminal exposure in Taiwan in addition to civil liability.

In this context, masters, officers, and other crew members involved in navigation or ship-handling decisions may be regarded as having acted negligently and could therefore become subject to criminal investigation or prosecution. Prosecutors may also seek compulsory measures under the Code of Criminal Procedure, including restrictions on departure from Taiwan.

Members whose vessels call at or navigate near Taiwanese waters, or in areas where subsea cables connected to Taiwan are located, may wish to take additional precautions in [voyage planning](#), [anchoring](#), and related operations.

We would also encourage Members to review their safety management systems, navigational practices, and crew training at an early stage to minimise the risk of cable damage and to ensure that the potential for criminal exposure in Taiwan is fully understood.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The above recommendations are based on the current understanding of the local regulations. If a Member has further concerns, it is recommended to consider contacting the local correspondent and/or ships agent.

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