



FCC Adopts New Rules to Accelerate the Buildout of Secure Submarine Cable Infrastructure

WASHINGTON, June 25, 2026—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted new rules to unleash submarine cable deployment for the United States. Submarine cable systems move the vast majority of the world’s internet traffic and strengthen the nation’s capacity to maintain secure, dependable communications across consumer, commercial, and defense sectors.

The new rules adopted will speed up the rollout of submarine cables—the backbone and unsung heroes of the global internet. They also support the essential capacity for the increasing computing demands and connectivity for artificial intelligence. Today’s Report and Order enhances submarine cable security and adopts a range of measures to streamline and accelerate the deployment of secure submarine cable infrastructure.

Specifically, the rules adopted today presumptively exempt cable applications from the rigorous Team Telecom licensing review when licensees can certify to high security standards that are structured to increase certainty, predictability, and faster timelines for the licensing process. Currently, all submarine cable applications get referred to Team Telecom, an Executive Branch interagency task force that reviews license applications for national security risks. The changes adopted would exempt applications from applicants that have operated cables without incident, can certify to the highest national security standards, and agree to ongoing oversight and monitoring.

In addition to streamlining deployment, the rules introduce a licensing requirement for owners and operators of submarine line terminal equipment (SLTE), which perform the most critical function of a submarine cable system by connecting the submarine cable system to U.S. terrestrial facilities. This SLTE licensing requirement will ensure FCC oversight of one of the most vulnerable parts of the submarine cable networks.

Finally, the rules will also protect submarine cables by updating safeguards that address vulnerabilities related to principal equipment, third-party service providers, and other areas of concern.

This is the latest milestone in the Commission’s ongoing effort to facilitate faster and more efficient submarine cable deployments, while strengthening national security. Today’s vote builds on rules unanimously [adopted](#) by the Commission last August. That rulemaking was the first comprehensive update to the Commission’s submarine cable rules in 25 years.

Action by the Commission June 25, 2026 by Second Report and Order and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 26-42). Chairman Carr, Commissioners Gomez and Trusty approving. Chairman Carr and Commissioner Trusty issuing separate statements.

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