# 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.*

## 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.

## Protection zones

Activities within protection zones ([NSW](https://www.acma.gov.au/zone-protect-sydney-submarine-cables) and [Perth](https://www.acma.gov.au/zone-protect-perth-submarine-cables)) 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](https://www.acma.gov.au/rules-operating-around-submarine-cables) are met.

More information on protection zones can be found on the ACMA [website](https://www.acma.gov.au/submarine-cables).

## 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.*

## How do I get Commonwealth approval?

Guidelines and application forms for submarine cable installation permits are available from the ACMA [website](https://www.acma.gov.au/submarine-cables).

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

## More Information

### Commonwealth

For more information on submarine cabling and protection zones, visit the ACMA [website](http://www.acma.gov.au) or contact:

Phone: 1300 850 115

Email: [subcablesenquiries@acma.gov.au](mailto: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](https://majorprojectshelp.business.gov.au/) or contact us:

Email: mpfa@industry.gov.au