

OfReg press release — Maya 1 undersea cable repaired (12 September 2024)

PRESS RELEASE

12 September 2024

Maya 1 Undersea Cable now repaired as OfReg brings local and international stakeholders to the table

Utilities regulator OfReg confirmed that the ongoing outage on a section of the Maya 1 undersea cable which normally provides Cayman with international internet connectivity has now been resolved. Following an offshore repair in Mexico carried out by the cable ship ‘Wave Sentinel’ and cable repair team, full traffic service was restored on Tuesday, 10 September 2024.

Maya 1 is one of the two undersea cables providing Cayman’s international connectivity requirements. Its repair brings to an end a period of internet traffic re-routing via Cayman’s second undersea cable connection, the Cayman Jamaica Fibre System (CJFS) and restores full capacity. While Cayman maintained connectivity with the rest of the world; the outage on a portion of the cable in Mexican waters highlighted the need for discussion relating to cost and availability of alternate or redundant connectivity routes.

While monitoring the ongoing outage situation, OfReg actively engaged local and international stakeholders to ensure that the national interest of the Cayman Islands remained a priority for those involved in the restoration of the downed cable, in particular due to the length of time taken to carry out the cable repair when the outage was initially reported in late June 2024.

At a meeting convened by OfReg on 5 September, senior executives from the Maya1 Cable consortium member Liberty Networks, Cable and Wireless Networks and local internet service providers C3, Digicel, Flow and Logic, met to discuss the status of the Maya 1 cable repair and a number of other issues. These included the commercial agreements currently in force, access to normal and redundant capacity on cables in the region and operational performance of services provided.

Mr. Sonji Myles, OfReg Interim CEO, said of the meeting, “As the regulator, subject to jurisdictional limitations, we are acting to ensure that Cayman’s international connectivity with the rest of the world is robust, effective and ultimately resilient. We are pleased to be able to bring interested parties together to discuss the issues and encouraged by the level of frank conversation and, in particular, the subsequent repair of the cable. Now that the cable is repaired we will be focusing on addressing all of the other issues arising out of the discussions which may lead to establishing a contemporary regulatory framework focused on international connectivity.”

Mr. Myles went on to emphasise the significance and importance of international connectivity as a key part of Cayman’s critical national infrastructure, “As an Island territory, international connectivity is critical for Cayman in that it underpins the socioeconomic fabric of the country by providing access to the internet for domestic and business users in the country, including the financial services industry, tourism, government, hospitals and schools. Any loss of service over these critical areas of infrastructure has the potential for severe consequences. We will continue to work with our licensees, cable owners, operators and other stakeholders to ensure that Cayman’s international connectivity ecosystem is effectively maintained, resilient and protected.”

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PHOTO: Mr. Sonji Myles, ICEO, Ms. Tessa Ryan, Deputy Director ICT(Ag), OfReg ICT Team, with representatives from Liberty Networks, Cable & Wireless Networks, Flow, C3, Digicel and Logic.

About OfReg

The Utility Regulation and Competition Office ('OfReg' or the 'Office') is the independent regulator established by section 4 of the Utility Regulation and Competition Act (as revised) (the 'URC Act') for the electricity, information, and communications technology, water, wastewater, and fuel sectors in the Cayman Islands.

OfReg provides the opportunity for consistency and collaboration in regulation across the energy, fuel, ICT, and water sectors; better utilisation of skills and resources resulting in more efficient and effective regulatory processes; encouraging competition where appropriate and feasible; championing sustainability and innovation across markets, contributing to the economic and social goals of the Cayman Islands.

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