



The director of the Balearic-division of Telefónica Technical Assistance, Gerardo Salvà, came to Formentera today to meet with Council president Jaume Ferrer, councilor of Information Technologies Sílvia Tur, councilor of Infrastructure Santi Juan and other Formentera Council members, regarding the incidents of this past summer.

The meeting, held at the behest of the Formentera Island Council, was called as a means to ascertain first hand Telefónica's plans in the prevention of further incidents like those that this summer left the island without ADSL Internet and 3G coverage twice in six weeks.

Telefónica's representatives informed councilmembers that improvements are currently being made to the electric cabling, a project which includes fixing the cabling to nets that will keep it close to the ocean surface. The project is envisioned for a stretch of 500 meters and would keep the cable at a depth of 1.5 meters. Representatives said estimates placed the end of activity in October.

Additionally, Telefónica noted that it had petitioned the Maritime Authority (Capitania Marítima in the Balearics) to declare a no-sail zone along the length of the cable for protection. The Formentera Council wishes to implore the Maritime Authority to facilitate the approval of Telefónica's petition in order to assure the best possible services for our island.

With respect to the proposal to install a second underwater cable linking Formentera and Eivissa, Telefónica considers that, given the permanent nature of the radio-relay system currently being installed, a second cable would be unnecessary. The radio-relay technology in use is one that would activate automatically in the theoretical event of cable failure, supplying the same velocity and coverage. The equipment functions using MTU technology, an alternative method of data transfer, an assurance that technical failures like those seen this summer will not negatively impact telecommunications customers.

It is of interest to note that the Council approved a measure on the occasion of the June plenary session to urge the Govern Balear to update and improve the Pla Sectorial de

Telecomunicaciones, or the Regional Telecommunications Directive. This is especially necessary in the case of Formentera, where a technical failure of this kind can suppose an undue consequences on the local economy and Formentera's image as a tourist destination.

Another issue raised at the meeting was the subject of lagging telecommunications coverage in a handful of areas around the island, like La Mola, Es Cap and Portossalé. The Formentera Council reminds residents that for households not covered by ADSL service, the Telefónica company has the legal obligation to provide at least 1 MB of coverage by satellite.

Additionally, the telecommunications company related that it anticipated installation of the 4G network to be completed by 2015. Thus, Council representatives petitioned Telefónica to ensure an effort be made to not leave Formentera last in queue awaiting these improvements.

In other infrastructure news, the Council also raised the topic of the anticipated deadline for the undergrounding of overhead cables, pending at more than ten locations across the island. The Council was able to obtain assurance that the venture would be completed no later than December 2014.