



Aware of the incidents of the day that have affected media, which in their turn are provoking considerable delays in the reparation of the underwater fiber-optic cable linking the islands of Eivissa and Formentera, the Formentera Island Council, in full appreciation of the fact that the responsible entity in the maintenance of this cable is the contract-holding Telefónica company itself, and also conscious of the momentary impossibility which has been claimed of these reparations, is demanding the involvement of every competent administrative body in order that the proper functioning of the cable be re-established.

Although technically private, the Telefónica cable represents a telecommunications installation that, in its provision of Internet for the island at large, has been declared to serve a general public interest and the provision of this service was open to public bidding by the local administration. In the license ceded in October 2005, explicit reference was made to the fact that the fiber-optic cable installation must minimise impact on surrounding prairies of *posidònia oceànica* algae as well as assure a depth sufficient to avoiding damage by watercraft that routinely drop anchor in the area.

The Formentera Council considers the incident extremely serious, and is furthermore concerned by the fact that the cable break, once again, was provoked by the anchor of a 'super-yacht' vessel. This fact is all the more worrying considering that navigational maps note the existence and exact coordinates of such cables. This incident is one more in a line of examples of the negative effects of the mass anchoring witnessed on our shorelines.

The Formentera Council has contacted the general management of Technological Innovation and Development, an office of the Department of Economy and Competitiveness of the Govern Balear to request certain safety measures necessary to Telefónica's fix of the cable. The Govern Balear is the entity responsible for assuring that the Sectorial Telecommunications Plan is respected, and the Council for ensuring that this responsibility is upheld. It thus falls under the authority of the Ministry of Development to ensure that Telefónica fulfils its obligations of minimum service provisions to the nation.

The Council's legal departments are studying potential reclamations to be made of the Telefónica concessionary company for the deficits in service provision. It is the Council's goal to determine upon which public entity responsibility falls according to current laws in effect.

At a plenary session of the Formentera Council held this past June, an accord was approved to urge the Govern to revise and improve the Sectorial Telecommunications Plan. The accord urged that special consideration be given the situation of Formentera, whose current lack of back-up measures the Council considers inexcusable. The plenary accord lamented both the absence of a secondary underwater fiber-optic cable or even, in the absence of such a back-up cable, alternate technological systems to guarantee identical service during momentary failures in the principal cable. A meeting is scheduled for mid-August with the heads of Telefónica to discuss these matters.

The Formentera Island Council and its local population are the victims in this situation, as evidenced by the detriment already caused to our local economy and tourist image. Therefore, full support will be given to any and all customers negatively effected by the circumstances and wishing to make formal complaints.