

Seaborn Networks, Werthein to build 48Tbps ARBR subsea cable

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Seaborn Networks and Grupo Werthein have signed a binding deal to build a new submarine fibre-optic cable system connecting Argentina and Brazil (ARBR), with onward connectivity to the US.



The ARBR system, which is Argentina's first independent submarine cable system, will be a four-fibre pair system with an initial maximum design capacity of 48Tbps and has an anticipated completion date in H2 2018.

"We are very pleased to announce our agreement with Grupo Werthein to build and operate the ARBR system," said Larry Schwartz, chairman and CEO of both Seaborn Networks and Seabras Group. "This project responds to the Argentine market need for substantially more international capacity on a next generation system while also offering the country's first independent operator model for a critical submarine cable route."

Argentina's Communications Minister, Oscar Aguad, said: "Argentina needs a global modernisation of communications infrastructure and this first independent submarine cable system is a very important step for that purpose. We are on the path of economic transformation of the country. This great project is the result of the new rules of the game that we promote, which, by providing predictability and legal security, allow the necessary conditions for companies to invest on a large scale with new projects in the country."

Seabras is the sole owner of the entire Seabras-1 submarine cable system between New York, US, and Sao Paulo, Brazil, which itself was developed and is operated and owned by Seaborn Networks. Seabras has sold capacity on Seabras-1 to a wide variety of large and small telecommunications companies and other customers either via indefeasible rights of use (IRUs) or short-term leases.

Dario Werthein of Grupo Werthein, which is a preeminent Argentine investment holding company with a track record of significant telecommunications holdings, added: "Given that it has been sixteen years since the last submarine cable was built from Argentina to Brazil, combined with the fact that this is the primary route for data and voice communications between Argentina and the rest of the world, this new and independent route is overdue."

The ARBR system will be developed and owned by the Seabras Group (an affiliate of Seabras) and Werthein. The combined ARBR + Seabras-1 cables reflect a total project size of more than \$575 million.

The news comes as Seaborn Networks is rumoured to be focusing on near-term plans to build to Cape Town, South Africa

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