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# Submarine Cables: The Handbook of Law and Policy

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Douglass, Burnett R., Robert C. Beckman, and Tara M. Davenport, eds. *Submarine Cables: The Handbook of Law and Policy*. Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2014. 437pp. \$185

Submarine fiber-optic cables provide an interconnected, seamless network that serves as the foundation of the world's telecommunications system. Each day stock exchanges, governments, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses transmit large amounts of data across the globe at the touch of a button, without ever thinking about how the information travels or what would happen if the system failed. The belief that most international communication travels by satellite is mistaken; it could not be further from the truth. As the editors point out, nearly 97 percent of all international communications flows over a relatively small number of submarine cables. Moreover, the majority of these cables are owned or funded not by states but rather by private entities. Thus governments are often unaware of the effort needed to build and maintain a cable system. As a result, some states have developed laws and policies that may not only be inconsistent with international law but also could threaten the health and well-being of the international telecommunications system, as well as the commercial sectors that rely on such systems.

To shed light on the legal and policy issues surrounding the laying, use, and maintenance of these crucial networks, the editors have compiled sixteen chapters, written by a combination of international lawyers and experts from the submarine-cable industry, covering all aspects of this little-known

subject. The handbook is a pioneering effort and serves as a one-stop resource for all issues related to the international governance of submarine cables. Each chapter begins with a layman's explanation of the technical activity being discussed, follows with a discourse on the legal issues associated with the activity, and concludes with policy recommendations to correct the gaps in international governance.

The topics addressed range from the broad basics, including a history of submarine cables and an overview of the industry and applicable international legal regimes, to the much narrower practical aspects of planning, surveying, manufacturing, laying, repairing, maintaining, and protecting cables. Special-purpose submarine cables are also addressed, along with, in a chapter dedicated to the subject, the relationship between submarine cables and the marine environment.

One theme that runs throughout the book is the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of the international legal regime governing submarine cables. There are two main international conventions related to submarine cables: the 1884 Convention for the Protection of Submarine Telegraph Cables, which applies to the relatively small set of countries that were signatory to it, and the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS), which applies to the vast majority of countries. Many contributors to this book make the case that state practice, particularly regarding coastal-state rights to regulate cable operations and the duties of states to protect cables, is at odds with the UNCLOS provisions on submarine cables. Many coastal states, for example, require that their permission be sought for cables outside their territorial waters and, conversely, fail to have adequate

laws on their ledgers to protect cables within their territorial waters. This leaves submarine cables vulnerable and could lead to unintended disruptions of service and potential economic crises.

The book's message is the need for better balance between competing interests in the ocean space. Both coastal and other states must show flexibility in their interpretations of their legal obligations. Their common interest lies in minimizing conflicts between submarine cables and competing uses, with the ultimate goal of protecting the integrity of the international communications system on which the world economy relies.

In the end, this book is well written and interesting. The explanation of how the submarine-cable industry operates is enlightening, and legal concepts are explained simply and concisely. Thus this is a useful volume not only for the academic and legal practitioner but for the casual reader as well. The policy recommendation sections would be especially useful to government officials and policy makers. For those with an interest in submarine cables, it is a must-read.

DAVID O'CONNELL  
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Fox, Wesley. *Six Essential Elements of Leadership: Marine Corps Wisdom of a Medal of Honor Recipient*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2011. 169pp. \$24.95

Colonel Wesley Fox, a Medal of Honor recipient, shares his leadership insight gleaned over a forty-three-year career as a Marine. This book is a combination memoir, personal narrative, and collection of examples of leadership.

Fox's philosophy is shaped from true-grit experiences as an enlisted Marine who climbed the ranks during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. His personal stories mixed with combat heroism give credibility to the book. The reader is both informed and inspired.

Fox begins by discussing various concepts of leadership, emphasizing that leadership begins with an understanding of human nature. In particular, knowing the thoughts, attitudes, and ideals of those under one's leadership is essential. He also addresses the differences between leadership and management, the sources of leaders, principles of leadership, and historical traits of leaders. These concepts emphasize that effective leaders are concerned about and care for those who follow. The six elements of leadership are care, personality, knowledge, motivation, commitment, and communication. An entire chapter is devoted to each of the six elements. Although these principles are effective, leadership takes hard work.

The real gem of the book is Fox's reflective and transparent writing style. His experience of four decades is a treasure trove of wisdom that offers a glimpse not only into the author's character but into the culture of the Marine Corps in a different era.

The book is written for a general audience and therefore has wide appeal. The fact that Fox's career is legendary in the Marine Corps only proves that he has indeed mastered the art of leadership. To put it simply, Colonel Fox is someone from whom we all can learn.

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