



France Telecom-Orange has suffered a major incident on its submarine fiber optic cable-ship, the Chamarel. A fire broke out on the ship late afternoon on August 8 while returning from a repair operation on the Sat3-Safe submarine fiber optic cable off the coast of Namibia in the Atlantic Ocean.

Despite the crew's efforts to control the fire, the decision was made to abandon the ship at around 8pm local time. All 56 crew members were safely recovered by a Namibian fishing vessel without injury or incident. The crew is currently located at the Namibian port, Walvis Bay and will be repatriated in the coming days.

The cause of the fire has not yet been established and a full investigation will be launched as soon as the vessel has been recovered. The Group will also work with the Namibian authorities to ensure minimum environmental impact during the recovery operation.

Thierry Bonhomme, Senior Executive Vice President in charge of Networks and Carriers, and R&D, said "This is a very serious incident, and I would like to express my sincere thanks to the crew members for their courage in managing the situation. The safety of our crew is our primary concern and we will look closely at the results of the investigation. I am also grateful for the support provided by the Namibian authorities."

This incident has no immediate impact on submarine cables in the area, which will continue to function normally. The Group will take all appropriate measures to manage maintenance operations that had been scheduled for the coming days.