

Firmus and SUBCO to Build Bernacchi-1, Tasmania's First new Sub-Sea Fibre Connection in over 20 years.

Launceston, Tasmania – June 2, 2026

Firmus and SUBCO today announced a landmark agreement to build a new submarine fibre optic cable connecting Tasmania to mainland Australia, significantly expanding the state's digital capacity and supporting the next generation of AI infrastructure.

The new cable, to be named Bernacchi-1 in honour of pioneering Tasmanian-raised scientist and Antarctic explorer Louis Bernacchi, will connect Tasmania into SUBCO's SMAP cable system between Sydney and Melbourne.

Underwritten by Firmus – represents a major private-sector led investment in Tasmania's digital infrastructure, that will be for the benefit of all Tasmanians for generations to come. This investment builds on SUBCO's previous investment in the 5,000km SMAP cable connecting Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

Bernacchi-1 will be the first new fibre connection between Tasmania and mainland Australia in more than 20 years and will deliver more than 60 terabits per second of additional capacity to the state on day one – more than all existing Bass Strait fibre cables combined.

Branching into SUBCO's new SMAP cable system and landing in Northern Tasmania (subject to finalisation of relevant marine and landing permits), Bernacchi-1 provides dual pathways to the mainland once it branches into SMAP – North-West to Melbourne, and North-East to Sydney. The path to Sydney is significant as the first time Tasmania has had a direct connection to New South Wales – from where the majority of Australia's overseas sub-sea cables land.

In addition to over doubling connectivity to the mainland, Bernacchi-1 substantially increases resilience for Tasmania's digital economy, expanded options for Tasmanian consumers, and faster connections to the global internet.

Bernacchi-1 is an example of the dividend for Australia and regional communities of the investment Firmus is making in our Australia-wide AI Factory buildout, Project Southgate.

"We're re-wiring Australia's digital infrastructure to make Australia one of the world's largest exporters of AI Tokens" said Tim Rosenfield, Firmus Technologies Co-CEO. "Investing in the critical sub-sea connectivity infrastructure required for this task is another example of Firmus leadership as a full-stack AI Factory Platform company."

"I've been trying to build a new fibre route between Tasmania and the mainland for over a decade to bring much needed diversity, resiliency and cheaper connectivity to Australia and the world. Bernacchi-1 for me is a great example of how Australia can leverage AI to create new sovereign owned infrastructure capability for the benefit of the nation as a whole and this simply would not have happened without Firmus' significant investment and underwriting the long-term operations." said Bevan Slattery, Founder & Co-CEO of SUBCO.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff congratulated Firmus and SUBCO on this significant investment in Tasmania.

"This significant private investment will strengthen Tasmania's digital future, boosting capacity, resilience and connectivity. The AI revolution is here and Tasmania is in a strong position to benefit from the jobs and infrastructure being delivered as part of this change. Our Government backs business and welcomes private investment, and we look forward to continue working with Firmus on opportunities in our State."

SUBCO will build and operate the cable as part of its SMAP cable system which is on track to be ready for service this month (June 2026), with the Tasmanian branch expected to be operational Q2 2027.

Firmus and SUBCO to Build Bernacchi-1, Tasmania's First new Sub-Sea Fibre Connection in over 20 years.

About the name: Louis Bernacchi (1876–1942) was an Australian-Italian physicist raised in Tasmania who, in 1898, became the first Tasmanian and first Australian to overwinter on Antarctica, conducting the first sustained scientific observations ever recorded on the continent. The Bernacchi-1 cable carries his name in recognition of Tasmania's enduring role as a launchpad for global frontier infrastructure - from polar science then, to AI and digital connectivity now.

About Firmus Technologies

Firmus Technologies (Firmus) is an Australian company building world-class, highly-efficient AI factories, utilising its proprietary technology to drive down total cost of ownership and accelerate AI adoption. With offices in Australia and Singapore, Firmus partners with government, enterprise, education and the innovators of tomorrow to create sustainable, sovereign AI solutions. Project Southgate is Firmus' national rollout of energy efficient AI factories across Australia.

Follow @firmustechnologies on LinkedIn.

About SMAP

A new transcontinental submarine cable system connecting Sydney, Melbourne (Torquay), Adelaide and Perth (S-M-A-P), with an extended branch to Tasmania (coming early-mid 2027), SMAP boasts 16 fibre pairs, full armouring and space division multiplexing (SDM) technology to deliver a total of 400Tbps. SMAP is set to become one of the world's largest capacity undersea cables, Australia's first hypercable and the very first subsea cable to connect the five states.

About SUBCO

SUBCO is a leading developer, owner and operator of next-generation submarine cable infrastructure. Since its founding in 2016, SUBCO has delivered some of the world's most innovative and strategically significant cable systems - including INDIGO West, INDIGO Central, the Oman Australia Cable (OAC), and SMAP, Australia's first fully armoured transcontinental submarine cable purpose-built for hyperscale and AI workloads. APX East, a direct Australia-US express system, is currently in development with an RFS target of 2028.

Through this growing portfolio, SUBCO has played a pivotal role in expanding Australia's international connectivity, strengthening the nation's position as a major digital hub in the Indo-Pacific region.

www.sub.co