

Minutes



SA Power Networks Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group Meeting 2 2025

Meeting Details

Organiser	Erin Hampton
Date	Wednesday 30 July 2025
Time	9:30am – 12pm
Location	The Rex Hotel

Attendees	CAG members	
	Davis Veremu	Chair
	Michael Lee	Deputy Chair
	John Baumann	Community representative
	Adam Davidson	Community representative
	Paul Matulin	Community representative
	Sue Chase	Regional representative
	Penny Williams	DC Streaky Bay
	SA Power Networks representatives	
	Ali Walsh	Head of Asset Strategy & Insights
	Erin Hampton	Stakeholder Engagement Lead
Apologies	Michael Kleinig	Community representative
	Paul Topping	Asset Management & Operations Innovation Manager
Presenters/ Guests	Elisia Reid	Asset Engineering Manager
	Matt Nelson	Powerline Asset Engineering Manager - Regional
	Kym Williams	Network Reliability Operations Manager
	Mark Vincent	Chief Operating Officer
	Travis Kauschke	Strategy and Development Manager
Confirmation of Previous minutes	Minutes from previous meeting accepted	
Business arising from previous minutes	Refer to agenda items	

1. Welcome

Davis opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners, welcoming everyone and noting apologies.

The group completed an around the room to acknowledge people joining us for the first time.

CAF Update: Erin explained that there was no formal update provided from the CAF however there was a recent discussion about strategic objectives and Travis has been invited to share some insights with the group.

Davis mentioned that SEC Newgate has been requested to deliver a stakeholder engagement measure to ensure SAPN's engagement strategy is effective, and metric based and to assess the engagement for the 2025-30 Reset consultation process.

The next CAF meeting is scheduled on 6 August.

Meeting	Action	Who	Due Date
June 2024	Presentation on outages, response times and reliability/ performance targets to a future meeting. Group to be provided regular updates in relation to reliability targets.	Ali/ Kym W	July 2025 Agenda Item 3.
March 2025	Reliability presentation deferred and presentation to include insulator washing/lessons learned. Mark Vincent/ Darren Milligan to attend.	Erin	July 2025 Agenda Item 3.
Nov 2024	Deep dive into the different initiatives in Roadmap, starting with Network Forecasting and Investment Plan.	Ali	Oct 2025
June 2024	Seek interest from the Adelaide Economic Development Agency to sit on Advisory Group.	Alex	No response from AEDA after multiple attempts
March 2025	ESCoSA to present to a future ACRAAG meeting on service standards.	Erin	TBC
March 2025	SAPN provide the top 10 risks SAPN faces in managing the network.	Erin	Oct 2025
March 2025	Monthly trends per depots and performance/ outage duration. Josh Newnham has commenced in a new role and will be invited to present to a future ACRAAG meeting.	Erin	TBC
March 2025	SAPN to provide visibility on critical assets/ high risk assets.	Ali	Oct 2025
March 2025	Alex/Erin/ Ali to have an offline meeting with Davis on customer outcomes and further discussion at next meeting.	Alex/Erin	July 2025

2. Executive Update – Mark Vincent

Mark explained his role as keeping the lights on and making sure they stay on with appropriate investment and ensuring the network operates safely. This includes making sure our people are safe, and our customers are informed of what impacts them.

His reflections on the regulatory outcome included that as a monopoly Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP) SAPN are regulated with what customers can be charged and are also required to adhere by service standards from local regulators. The determination from the AER was positive as SAPN received a 20-25% increase in capital expenditure above what was received in the last period however not all \$\$ requested for augmentation expenditure was approved meaning some short-term challenges for the business.

The challenges SAPN is facing is if there is an increase in capacity on the network which is expected, how this can be effectively managed. Other distribution businesses in Australia are building new assets to support growth however SAPN have existing assets that are still meeting the needs of customers. This means that the majority of our spend is replacement expenditure as opposed to augmentation expenditure with asset condition and risk a high priority.

SAPN are in a difficult position with the AER as our network reliability and performance is good due to some other initiatives we have invested in, including feeder automation and the AER sees the performance data and is not as open to supporting arguments for more replacement expenditure.

Mark commented that he sees the ACRAAG as assisting in optimal selection for the investment portfolio and the efficient delivery of investment projects.

Discussion: Michael asked if stobie pole manufacturing capacity and replacement requirements were being considered as a risk and if the manufacture levels should be increased. Mark advised that stobie poles are not a big area of concern as the facility is managing with current and forecast future requirements and there are options including pole plating that can extend pole lifetimes significantly. Overhead conductor is a focus area as it is more difficult to understand asset condition.

To manage load capacity and avoid costly augmentation, batteries placed at strategic locations as well as individual homes is optimal. This allows for broad benefits for communities, but households can also individually manage their generation, storage and consumption effectively.



3. Reliability and Insulator Washing Update – Kym Williams

Please refer to slides.

SAPN experiences Major Event Days (MEDs) which are exempt from reliability reporting and network reliability has steadily improved in the last 20 years on average per customer. Some customers, mainly in rural areas and those who were impacted by the Grey Headed Flying Fox colony in Botanic Park in the last 3 years experienced more interruptions on average. Grey Headed Flying Fox (GHFF) outages have been reduced by strategies including feeder automation/sectionalisation and animal guards installed in repeat outage locations. Animals guards are installed at pole tops as many outages are caused by flashovers of pole cross arms to conductors.

The recent insulator pollution situation caused a lot of momentary outages for customers in the North of SA.

The reliability key objective is to maintain performance of the HV network but optimally improve over time with feeders classified as CBD, Metro and Rural Short and Rural Long. Reliability improvements primarily target asset failures and weather impact mitigation opportunities and the team have a new tool which maps and identifies the cause of outages, allowing greater investigation and replacement/mitigation opportunities from accurate data capture including crews being able to submit photos of asset failures.

Insulator Washing

The washing strategy focuses on the highest impact areas/network first including the lines that run between substations/33,000V lines potentially avoiding an outage impacting 10,000 customers. SAPN does not have the ability to wash all insulators on the distribution network with heavy rains usually doing this naturally. Due to extremely dry weather in the Northern region (Pt Augusta did not see rain until June this year), pollution buildup and then heavy sea fog in these areas impacted many customers.

4. CBD Reliability – Elisia Reid

Please refer to slides

CBD cable replacement expenditure requests were approved by the AER in full for the current Reset period. The CBD Reliability program will include:

- Cable replacement
- Selected locations of automation cubicle installation (minimal due to low benefit vs. Cost)

Automation will allow for cable replacement to be completed over time while still meeting asset replacement and reliability improvements (in the past five years, 60% of the outages in the CBD have been caused by cable failures).

In 2026, 21 cables are due to be replaced equating to 7.2km of asset and an expenditure of \$6.2 million, a significant uplift from previous years. The replacements will focus on aluminium cable as most faults have occurred on this cable type. Duct installation is a known issue as there is minimal room in some locations due to the amount of other utility and service infrastructure.

This work will coincide with council work to upgrade streetscapes in Hindley Street and Gouger Street. Attempts are being made to work with the council to reduce impact on the community and work of others.

5. Open Wire Services Replacement Trial

Please refer to slides



Properties with open wire services (also called bare wire) can expose customers to higher risk of electric shocks. These are not broken or defective connections rather older installations that need to be upgraded to current standards to increase public safety.

There are approximately 6000 of these installations on the network, reaching asset end of life and requiring replacement. The initial trial will be strategic in attempting to reduce the risk that some homes may be disconnected pending customer repairs and will involve 50 customers in 2025 and up to 200 in 2026 with comprehensive communication to impacted properties.

6. Strategic Measures and Asset Management Objectives – Travis Kauschke and Ali Walsh

Please refer to slides.

SAPN develops an annual strategic plan with 2026 currently under development. This then feeds into a long-term strategic direction that is updated every five years and has a 15-year view. From this, departments and teams develop their own plans, with individual employees contributing via their yearly Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs). This is supported by the company Visions and Values that were published at the beginning of 2025.

The Network Strategic Objectives and Key Result Areas focus on risk mitigation and reliability improvements however metrics within these are subject to change as influences like government policy and customer impacts change.

The Strategic Measures and Asset Management Objectives also need to be considered financially both in the short and sustainable long-term ensuring value for customers and budget compliance.

Please refer to slides for more information about the Asset Management Objectives aligned with the themes of Safety, Reliability, Compliance, Sustainability, Customer Experience and Commercial.

Action: Travis to present at first meeting of 2026 on updated strategic objectives.

Action: ACRAAG to review details of Asset Management Objectives in the slides and provide any feedback via email.

7. Customer Outcomes – Davis Veremu and Erin Hampton

Please refer to slides for list of Customer Outcomes and Metrics.

CAF Chair Andrew Nance has provided his priorities for ACRAAG focus:

- Repex accountability and risk removed per \$ spent e.g., bushfire risk
- Communications Plan – external engagement of customer projects/connections

Discussion: Ali explained that one of the items developed as part of the Asset Management Transformation Plan (AMTP) was a Communications Plan. One of the items in the plan was the development of an asset newsletter. A draft of this was provided to the group for review. Feedback collected identified that instead of a customer project focus, the newsletter should focus on reliability improvements and work initiated by SAPN in the regions. Erin advised that she will look to access this information and develop another draft newsletter for group review.

Other suggestions from the group for inclusion in the newsletter included the ARENA Community Batteries Project, regional reliability reporting, recloser/sectionalizer installations, and an article on our employees/crews in the region.

Action: Erin to develop draft of Asset Newsletter focussing on SAPN investment in the regions as well as the ARENA Community Batteries project and provide to group members before next meeting.



Discussion: Davis commented on the importance of cross collaboration between groups and potentially inviting a Vegetation Advisory Group member to a future meeting to discuss bushfire risk mitigation expenditure.

Action: Erin/Ali to investigate collaboration opportunities with the Vegetation Management Advisory Group.

8. Other Business - all

Paul Topping was unable to join the meeting to discuss the Innovation Operating Model and Pathway.

Action: Paul to be invited to the next meeting to present.

Innovation Advisory Group – Michael Lee

SAPN representatives include James Brown, Michelle Howie and Sam Craft with chair Ed Chan who is in an energy advisory role with Mott MacDonald.

Michael explained his role on the Innovation Advisory Group as the ACRAAG's representative (and deputy chair). SA Power Networks' Business Case and addendum to the AER for funding are available via the below links:

[Business case: Innovation fund](#)

[Innovation Fund Business case addendum](#)

Innovation Advisory Group Key Objectives:

- To provide input into project selection, prioritisation and delivery of Innovation Fund activities.
- To monitor delivery and discuss how knowledge from Innovation Fund projects will be shared with industry, consumers and regulators.
- To provide visibility of SA Power Networks broader Innovation Framework and relevant innovation projects.
- To discuss and provide input on customer or industry problem statements or ideas for innovation arising from the other Advisory Groups, for consideration in the Innovation Framework.

ACRAAG Bus Tour – Erin Hampton

Erin advised that the next meeting on 22 October will be a bus tour to Mount Barker to obtain a first-hand understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with new developments. By visiting these sites, the group will gain insights into how SA Power Networks is managing asset condition, risk, and network growth in rapidly expanding areas.

Davis thanked everyone for attending and Erin closed the meeting at 12:26pm.

Action tracker – Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group				
Meeting	Item	Action	Who / When	Status
July	5.	Travis to present at first meeting of 2026 on updated strategic objectives.	Travis	1 st meeting 2026
July	6.	Erin to develop draft of Asset Newsletter focussing on reliability improvements and SAPN initiated work in the regions and provide to group members before next meeting.	Erin	TBC
July	6.	ACRAAG to review details of Asset Management Objectives in the slides and provide any feedback via email.	all	TBC
July	7.	Erin/Ali to investigate collaboration opportunities with the Vegetation Management Advisory Group.	Erin/Ali	TBC
July	7.	Paul to be invited to the next meeting to present.	Erin	TBC



Next meeting – Wednesday 22 October 2025 – Bus tour Keswick Head Office pick up.

