

SA Power Networks' Network Performance Advisory Group

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	Friday 14 August 2026
Time	9.30am to 12.30pm
Location	Rex Hotel

Members

Jake Bugden	Chair
Jen Bradley	Regional Customer
Cameron England	Residential Customer
Ian Furness	Office Technical Regulator
Penny Williams	Streaky Bay Council
Cat Beaton	First Nations Clean Energy
Mike Leane	Residential Customer
Sue Chase	Regional Customer

SA Power Networks

Mark Vincent, Chief Officer Asset Management and Operations
Mark Pynn, Head of Asset Investment
Alex Lewis, Stakeholder Engagement Manager

Guests/Presenters

Kym Williams, Reliability Manager
Ali Walsh, Manager Expenditure Forecasting
Patrice Pearson, Stakeholder Engagement Business Partner

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Apologies from Michael Leane and Sue Chase were noted.
- Key points from group introductions:
 - Penny discussed embracing the learning as part of her interest in the group.
 - Cat is interested in building relationships between first nations, utilities and government and bringing the first nations sentiment in as we have a lot to offer each other – recognising the importance of reliable energy.
 - Mark Vincent discussed the importance of the stakeholders and the importance of SA Power Networks engaging to understand and balance the views of all customers.
 - Cameron England brings educated customer insights, policy advice and expertise.
 - Kym Williams brings network performance and extensive experience with regulatory engagement.
 - Jen Bradley is an independent energy consumer advocate and got involved following a poor retailer consumer experience.
 - Ian Furness brings technical regulation and safety expertise and keen to hear opportunities for regulatory improvements.
 - Ali Walsh brings a desire to hear how our asset management objectives are meeting the customers' needs.
 - Alex Lewis manages the consultative groups and brings customer insights back into the business.
 - Mark Pynn brings long term planning and expenditure on the network to draw the link on what we do in the networks and how it impacts customers.
 - Patrice Pearson discussed the Vegetation Management working group and the ability to inform some of the topics considered by the Network Performance group on strategic items.

2. Work done previously by ACRAG and RRAG – Penny Williams

- Penny Williams discussed the work of the former Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group (ACRAG) and Regional and Remote Advisory Group (RRAG).
- The ACRAG piloted an asset management newsletter which was well received in regional areas to enhance awareness of investment and expenditure in regional areas on the network.
- Penny advised SAPNs approach to Town Hall meetings during insulator pollution was well received from the community and the face-to-face interactions were valued.
- The RRAG looked at how the proposal was tracking in terms of reliability expenditure, with a focus on improving supply for worst served customers.
- Understanding the challenges of the CBD is good for regional customers to understand that other areas require investment.

3. Overview of Reliability – Kym Williams

- Kim provided an overview of outage trends and duration and causes of reliability issues including the value customers place on reliability – separate presentation on Value of Customer Reliability (VCR).
- Vegetation outages were highlighted as the highest outage cause, but the issues are generally caused by trees outside of the clearance zones – not from a lack of compliance of the cutting program.
- SA Power Networks data could be expanded to include unplanned outages and vegetation conflicts from trees are classified as cable faults – other underground utilities were also discussed.
- Insulator pollution was discussed and the importance of community to understand the issue and response including silicone spray on lower customer impact lines.
- Discussion about the multitude of factors that inform the insulator pollution including climate related issues and the quality of the insulators provided.
- The role of Powerline Environment Committee in providing funding to undergrounding was discussed, however the focus is on visual amenity rather than reliability.
- Rural supply restoration challenges and how we report to our regulators on our performance.
- Feedback on the reliability funding showed willingness to pay for customers worst served and to enhance further network resilience.

4. Our key network challenges – Mark Pynn and Mark Vincent

- Mark Vincent discussed the focus of keeping the network safe and reliable and the importance of future resilience of the network.
- Energy divide and equity was discussed as a key strategic issue with the uptake of battery and solar power impact on those customers unable to invest and how this informs the tariff structure.
- Community expectations and increasing reliability on electricity and telecommunications.
- Discussion about the role of government in managing energy affordability and supporting vulnerable customers, and SA Power Networks advocacy efforts on energy equity.
- Mark discussed the considerations of the regulatory submission that includes customer views about 'how much we should spend' and then how we allocate funds during the 5-year period to determine 'where should we allocate the money provided'.
- Ian Furness outlined the role of the OTR and its emergency response function, and the collaboration with SAPOL in these events.
- Telecommunications is a key issue during outages in regional and remote areas. Jen shared her personal experience on the community responsibilities that come into play when outages occur and the significant impacts that can occur.
- Lived experience forum in Hawker was helpful to understand the shared effort from SA Power Networks. This could inform a broader framework for coordinated response to outages beyond SAPN.



5. Key focus areas and how we want to work together

- Jake facilitated a discussion about what themes and priority topics the group would like to focus on and progress as a group.
- The following list was developed for review and further discussion.

Innovation (noting separate Innovation Advisory Group)	Previous reset reporting was discussed as a key input into the group and funding available through the current regulatory period.
	A key focus could be addressing worst served customers through innovation.
	The consideration of innovation and how this can impact cost to serve.
Customer insights, building relationships and improved communications	The need for the regional customer to be engaged with operational needs when network fails. A framework for coordinated response to outages beyond SAPN and how we connect into communities that are on the ground.
	The importance of the building relationships and leveraging connections in community, particularly in regional areas during outages. Importance of understanding lived experience.
	How SA Power Networks communicate with customers and building deeper relationships with communities.
	Insights in relation to customer reliability and developing trade-offs in collaboration with the group.
	The importance of worst served customers, regional, fringe of grid communities, and First Nations communities that we could bring to this group.
	Engagement with replacement options for Leigh Creek to Davenport transmission line. Monitor the development options including Stand Alone Power Systems (SAPS) or thin grid connected renewable energy systems as the Regulatory Investment Test for Transmission (RIT-T) process is led initially by ElectraNet.
Regulatory funding considerations and advocacy opportunities	Power to telecommunications have been considered by other states in their regulatory proposal to support customers during outages
	The role of ESCOSA and OTR to support potential reliability settings. ESCOSA are about to engage on responsibilities (Service Standard Framework) and the NPAG have an opportunity to influence in these opportunities
Climate change, safety and environmental factors	Safety, managing risk, bushfire risk to be a key consideration and data to track of how this is impacting the network and consumers.
	El Nino and future climate change impacts.
	Vegetation management and relationship, noting the separate Vegetation Management Working Group.
Reporting	Tracking against Asset Management Objectives and where Innovation and worst served funding is being directed.

Ways of Working

- The group supported optional quick online meetings as required.
- It was agreed that Chatham House Rule be applied to meetings to encourage open and candid discussion, with confidentiality managed appropriately.

6. Other business

- Ideas about other engagement techniques, such as site tours or bus trips, to help inform the groups priority topics, agenda setting and understanding of issues and challenges in network performance.

7. Next Meeting – Date Wednesday 25 November, 9.30am-12.30pm



Action table

Item	Action Item	Who	Status
1	Future presentation to be provided to group on the Value of Customer Reliability (VCR) that outlines how we assess the value customers place on reliability.	Kym Williams	
2	Advocacy and Innovation developed problem statements from previous advisory groups to be distributed in minutes.	Alex Lewis	
3	Communication improvements for regions on topics such as insulator pollution and how we communicate eg. regional newsletters and bolstering members with key facts and information.	Stakeholder Engagement Team	
4	Further information to be provided about transmission line failure in the metrics about outage causes and the difference between CBD and regional data.	Kym Williams	
5	Penny to send some information regarding the application of Star Link to the group.	Penny Williams	
6	Farm Safety workshop slides to be provided with minutes.	Alex Lewis	
7	Standard operational update and reporting including as standing agenda item and an overview of our asset management objectives and performance for next meeting.	Mark Pynn/ Ali Walsh	Ongoing

