

Minutes



SA Power Networks Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group Meeting 1 2026

Meeting Details

Organiser Erin Hampton

Date Thursday 26 March 2026

Time 9:30am – 12pm

Location Food on the Table

Attendees	CAG members	
	Davis Veremu	Chair
	Michael Lee	Deputy Chair
	John Baumann	Community representative
	Adam Davidson	Community representative
	Paul Matulin	Community representative
	Penny Williams	DC Streaky Bay
	SA Power Networks representatives	
Apologies	Ali Walsh	Head of Asset Strategy & Insights
	Erin Hampton	Stakeholder Engagement Lead
Presenters/ Guests	Sue Chase	
	Kym William	Network and Reliability Operations Manager
	Matt Napolitano	Head of Asset Operations

1. Welcome

Ali opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional owners in their local language and noting that the meeting was being held on Kurna Lands. Davis welcomed everyone and noted apologies.

CAF Update:

Davis provided an update from the CAF meeting held on 26 February 2026. Please see discussion points below:

- Andrew Nance chaired his final meeting as CAF Chair. He has taken on a new role as Director of Planning and Forecasting at the Department of Energy and Mining.
- CEO Update on SAPN's recent safety survey and aggressive behaviour within the community campaign.
- Insulator Pollution and SAPN's response
- Presentation on Network Planning
- Advisory Group Chair insights

An update was provided on the Outstanding Action Items below.

2. Insulator Pollution – Kym Williams/Matt Napolitano

Please refer to slides for further information.

Matt explained the nature of insulator pollution and how the issue emerged in summer 2024/25 as a weather-driven, system wide reliability issue. Possible reasons for this include:

- Climatic changes: longer periods without rain and rising sea surface temperatures.
- Undetected impacts of last year's pollution event.

Insulator pollution is caused by a build-up of salt in coastal areas, dust and dirt and when this is exposed to dew or similar conditions, flashovers, momentary interruptions and sparking can be seen at pole tops.

Kym presented a timeline of events including when insulator pollution was causing the most impact to the network, the impact of the washing program at substations/HV conductors, the emergency insulator washing and replacement program and washing rains at the end of February 2026. Back-up generation was deployed in the areas most impacted.

Non-soluble pollutants and their impacts as well as the differences between ceramic, polymer and silicon insulators are being investigated by a task force developed to manage SAPN's response and management plan.

SAPN's response includes:

- Installation of HV switches with automation functionality
- Silicon coating of insulators (under investigation including environmental impacts including a customer/landowner consultation requirement).
- Multi-year insulator upgrade program with more pollution resilient insulators, combined with broader network rebuild.

Discussion: the insulator pollution response was not included in the Regulatory Reset 2025–30 costings, as an event of this scale had not previously occurred. Initially expected to be a one-off in 2024/25, its recurrence in 2025/26 required a more forward-looking approach. This included deploying insulator washing via helicopter and ground-based water cannons. These methods are faster and reduce the need for line disconnection and earthing compared to pole-top washing using EWP's.

New technology and procedures for insulator washing had to be investigated prior to deployment to ensure safety standards were met. Helicopter washing of insulators was suggested in early 2025 and required further investigation. The fatality at Carrapateena Copper Mine in 2019 was discussed with the incidence report available here - [Collision with terrain involving AS350, VH-SZS, 60 km east of Woomera, South Australia, on 20 March 2019 | ATSB](#)

There was an increase in fire start potential throughout the insulator pollution event however these usually occurred in low fire risk conditions e.g., early morning moisture on pole top equipment, ground, etc. Locations with higher fire start reports have been included in a priority list for mitigation.

Further information about how we kept customers informed throughout the event is available below:

- [Outages due to insulator pollution - SA Power Networks](#)
- [Insulator pollution - SA Power Networks](#)
- [Insulator Pollution Explained](#)

Action: ACRAG requested an update for the new Network Performance Advisory Group outlining how funding for the insulator pollution management plan is being sourced and reallocated. Consideration to also be given on inclusion in next Reset Submission.

Action: SAPN representatives to ensure that initiatives proposed by the group continue under the new Network Performance Advisory Group. This includes the Asset Management Newsletter, which received positive feedback in the West Coast and Eyre region but has not yet secured internal support to continue.

3. Consultative Group Review – Erin Hampton

Please refer to slides.

Erin presented the new Consultative Group Model and how feedback from current members contributed. Other items discussed included:



- The timeline for development of the new groups.
- Member expression of Interest process.
- Governance and reporting structure.
- Membership and objectives of new Network Performance Advisory Group

The terms of reference for all groups will be available through the Expression of Interest process. Vulnerable customer and First Nations discussions will be held at the CAF level as both are a strategic priority. Briefing notes will be provided by the strategic groups to the CAF quarterly with escalation of important or strategic matters possible from any group at any time.

Engagement will continue outside of the formal consultative group structure and will include broader engagement on issues such as Vegetation Management, Connections and Development as well as with regional and remote communities.

There will be change to the Innovation Advisory Group with members not required to represent another group and the Reset Advisory Group will also be a standalone group and not a CAF sub-committee.

Recommendations from the group included:

- Alignment of membership terms to the Reset Submission/Determination.
- Continuity of at least two ACRAG members to Network Performance Advisory Group
- Increase numbers of new group to 10 to ensure broad representation.
- Voluntary attendance at new member induction for ongoing members.
- Greater internal SME representation on the IAG (outside of innovation members).
- Ensuring balanced membership of metro and regional areas.

Action: Erin to provide group feedback on new consultative group structure to management for consideration.

4. Asset Management Objectives Revisit – Ali Walsh

Please refer to slides for further information.

The group was requested to review previous meeting presentation and minutes to contribute to the discussion. The Asset Management Objectives were presented (please see below).



Insights into how performance is tracking against the objectives was presented and the group was asked for feedback on the measures/objectives including any potential gaps identified.

Discussion: The group had concerns about the level of executive endorsement of the AMOs as well as lack of understanding of the AMOs and targets in the new group (see action). They also wanted to ensure that Ali would remain as a SME for the new Network Performance Advisory Group.

A live demonstration of the AMO dashboard was planned however the meeting was running overtime. Questions were asked about the efforts to meet the targets and how SAPN ensures these are optimal. Ali explained that there are financial penalties for not meeting reliability targets.

Wide-scale undergrounding of conductors is not considered financially viable with alternatives including lightweight covered conductor that can be strung on existing poles being trialled by Tas Networks – please see following article - [New generation covered conductor installed in tasmania](#).

The group were generally supportive of the AMOs however recommended a deep dive to ensure the new group understands them effectively.

Action: A deep dive workshop into the Asset Management Objectives to be arranged with new Network Performance Group members.

Meeting closed at 12:17pm

Action tracker – Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group				
Meeting	Item	Action	Who / When	Status
March	2	Update for new Advisory Group outlining how funding for the insulator pollution management plan is being sourced and reallocated.	Engagement Lead	Outstanding
March	2	SAPN to ensure that initiatives proposed by the group continue under the new Advisory Group. including the Asset Management Newsletter.	Engagement Lead	Outstanding
March	3	Feedback to be provided on new consultative group structure to management for consideration.	Erin	Complete
March	4	A deep dive workshop into the Asset Management Objectives to be arranged with new Network Performance Group members.	Engagement Lead	Outstanding

