Minutes

SA Power Networks' Community Advisory Forum

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	Wed 12 February
Time	9.30am to 12.30pm
Location	Food on the Table

Members

Andrew Nance	Chair
Matthew Curnow	RAG rep.
Chris Marsden	RAG Rep.
Dominic O'Leary	P4B Solar
Georgie Morris	VCAG Rep
Heather Merran	TAG Rep.
Kim Syrus	VMAG Rep.
Lachlan Newman	Community Rep.
Mike Leane	RRAG Rep.
Davis Veremu	ACRAG Rep.
Troy Smith	CAG Rep.

SA Power Networks
Jessica Morris, Chief Customer & Strategy Officer
Alex Lewis, Reset Engagement Manager
Megan Grey, Head of Communication & Eng.
Kylie Lush, Minute Secretary
Richard Sibly, Head of Regulation

Guests/ observers
Andrew Bills, CEO SA Power Networks
James Brown, Snr Mgr Enterprise Innovation
Michelle Howie, Innovation Dev Manager
Cathi Buttfield, SA Business Chamber
Vlora Dzeladini, Operational Risk Manager
Alex Fry, Proxy for Georgie Morris.

1 Recurring Ordinary Items

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
Andrew acknowledged the traditional owners of the land and paid respect to elders past and present. Alex Fry was welcomed to the group, representing Georgie as part of the Vulnerable Customers Advisory Group.

Apologies – Georgie Morris

Previous Minutes - Minutes from the previous meeting were circulated to the members and accepted as an accurate representation of the meeting.

1.4 Safety Share

Vlora, Operational Risk Manager for SA Power Networks, provided an update on bushfire preparation and fire danger preparedness.
She presented on how SA Power Networks manages the risk of starting a bushfire from our electrical assets and the preparation that goes into mitigating risks, noting the bushfire risk period of November to April.

- Temperature and weather data is provided by the Bureau of Meteorology, with bureau forecasts and CFS Australian Fire Danger Rating system maps used in decision making processes.
- Public safety power shut-offs are a last resort, used under catastrophic conditions.
- Vegetation and asset defects are treated with equal importance due to their fire-start risk.
- The net outcome of fire prevention measures is not quantified in dollars but in the prevention of fires and potential loss of life.
- Customers in high-risk areas are notified via text messaging in advance of potential power shut-offs. The decision-making process for disconnection is rapid and can occur within a 10-minute window based on escalating conditions, with the final call falling with SA Power Networks' CEO, Andrew Bills. While the decision is SAPN's, we consult with CFS/ State Govt.
- A Bushfire Risk Mitigation Committee, including multiple chief officers, oversee changes to the disconnection process. Any major process changes are reported to the Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR).
- South Australia has a history of power disconnection for bushfire risk, unlike some other states.

Questions included:

- The scope of CSIROs modelling – does SAPN provide the data inputs?
- What is the net outcome and costs to customers of the program?
- The notification process for public shut-offs?
- Governance arrangements, both internally and externally.
- Whether other States disconnect and queried why they didn't disconnect?

2. Executive Update

Jess provided an update on SA Power Networks simplified strategic narrative and strategy on a page, discussing the pivotal role we play in accelerating South Australia's progress toward a sustainable energy future.

- There was a strong emphasis on the role of advisory groups on the topic of innovation and the importance of these groups in driving innovation and contributing to the overall strategic direction of the business was highlighted.

Andrew Bills discussed SA Power Networks' 2025 Strategy with the vision being 'Connecting South Australians to a better energy future, today'. He highlighted key priorities for 2025 and presented our new values which articulate the behaviours that are expected from our people in delivering on our strategy.

- A suggestion that a unified approach to problem-solving and innovation would lead to better outcomes for the business and its customers and the need for consistency and coherency across the business.

A discussion on our values and strategic narrative, and how this aligns with the CAF, to be added to the agenda for the May meeting. Ben Birch and Travis Kauschke to be invited.

Jess to share the Indicative Pricing Slides for 2025/26.

3.1 Innovation Advisory Group

James Brown, Senior Manager of Enterprise Innovation at SA Power Networks' spoke about the recent operating model changes that have led to the creation of a new Enterprise Innovation team, formed on 9 December 2024, which includes Michelle Howie, Innovation Development Manager, who also presented.

- Discussions were had on the role of the Innovation Advisory Group with expressions of interest opening for advisory group members in March. A clearly defined governance model and set of principles will guide project selection and prioritisation.
- Draft Terms of Reference, outlining objectives, have been developed.
- The proposed innovation fund enables projects not covered by existing business cases to be created with up to $20m fund, 'use it or lose it' funding model.
- Measuring both tangible and intangible value from innovation was discussed with suggestions to develop a method for measuring this.
- The importance of testing to determine the value of innovation was highlighted.
- Customer benefits such as improved customer experience, cost reduction through operation efficiencies and improving network utilisation and customer choice were discussed as part of the innovation framework concept.

3.2 Planning & Priorities for 2025 – Advisory Group updates, priorities & customer outcomes.

The chair of each of the Advisory Groups provided updates on their respective groups providing information on emerging issues and key insights.

Lachlan provided an update on CERIAG and the current priorities being the establishment of the remaining members for this group and endorsement of customer outcomes.
Lachlan caught up with Nathan, Head of Cyber Security and Alex, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, with discussions around investing in their cadets to fill analyst roles. Multi-Factor Authentication, system security and Security Advisory Group were also discussed. SA Power Networks has a Cyber Governance Committee which Jess, Chief of Customer & Strategy and Andrew Bills CEO sit on. Current incidents and how they are dealt with were discussed. A quarterly catch up will occur to enable a cyber security update to be provided to CAF.

Kim provided an update on Vegetation Management Advisory Group. Charles Donovan, Major Customer Business Partner at SA Power Networks' presented to VMAG about PLEC projects and the cost of undergrounding. The variety of tools for trimming trees was also discussed which they will go into more detail about at their first VMAG meeting of 2025.

Troy provided an update on the Connections Advisory Group. First meeting of 2025 is Tuesday 18 February with Ian Furness from the OTR presenting on industry standards and compliance/ licensing.

Chris provided an update for the Reset Advisory Group, noting he attended SA Power Networks' presentation to the AER Board on 19 December 2024. He also spoke about a customer led post implementation review which will be discussed at RAG's first meeting of 2025 next Tuesday 18 February, along with information on the annual pricing review and 'average customer' profiles.

Davis spoke of the current focus areas for Asset Condition and Risk Advisory Group. Communication strategies for customers, regional investment and expenditure and outcomes of the AER's Draft Determination are a priority, as well as how issues in relation to repex, augex and CBD reliability are addressed. Davis noted a field trip for this group which will likely take place in October 2025. The groups is keen to see quantitative alignment for all topics discussed and have guest speakers, so practical feedback can be provided on how SA Power Networks are managing their assets.

Mike is finalising the customer outcomes for the group and will have their first meeting 11 March. Emerging issues are telecommunications during outages for regional customers. Future obligations and long-term energy supplies for towns in regional areas is also a key topic, noting they are keen to ensure generators are going

where they are most needed. Mike noted his upcoming trip to Streaky Bay to attend the EPLGA conference with Alex Lewis and discussions with the EP Zone Emergency Management Group.

Alex Fry provided an update for Vulnerable Customers Advisory Group in Georgie's absence. The expansion of the group was noted to include representation from the Department of Energy and Mining and Energy Advisory Services. Alex F mentioned being the recipient of the Kelvin Trimper Scholarship which will see her project developed to upgrade a rental property to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy costs and provide recommendations. Concerns raised around the cost of upgrading meter boards for vulnerable customers and renters with discussions around cost implications and who should bear the cost of associated remediation works.

Heather provided an update for Tariffs Advisory Group and discussed concerns around the narrative of the 'new solar tax' and the importance of SA Power Networks' being upfront about the export tariff. Accelerated roll out of smart meters was also discussed and the concern of who will be left behind due to the cost of smart meter replacements. It was suggested to have export tariffs as an agenda item for next CAF meeting to hear about the proposed communications/ education plan.

Andrew suggested the problem around Smart Meters could be one of the Innovation Advisory Groups first projects to help find a solution and discuss the end game for the customer, especially those who will be find it challenging to cover the cost.

3.3 SA Business Chamber – Key issues impacting SA businesses

Cathi, who recently joined SA Business Chamber in late September 2024, presented on key issues that are impacting SA businesses. SA Business Chamber represent over 3000 members across 19 industry sectors and the broader SA business community. She spoke of SA Chamber's vision, which is for South Australia to be the best place to do business, aiming to remove complexity and create opportunities.

- SA Business Chamber put out a survey of 'Business Expectations' December 2024. Results of this survey will be published late February 2025. It was noted that small business finds it hard to provide feedback due to time restraints.
- Cathi will be joining the Tariffs Advisory Group and attending some of the Reset Advisory Group meetings.
- The Community Advisory Forum members are keen to continue with SA Business Chamber to address key issues impacting SA businesses.

4. Other Business

Andrew discussed the recognition of the internal context moving in a direction that provides opportunities to influence and deliver better outcomes for customers and the great opportunity to influence this as a group. This year is the Year of the Snake and the metaphor of the snake shedding its skin was used to symbolise growth and leaving old ways behind.
The goal for the end of the year is to have a clear set of outcomes communicated with the business and internal alignment to deliver them on.

Andrew thanked members for attending.

Meeting closed at 12.34

Current action Items:

Item		Who	Complete
2	SAPN Values and alignment with CAF and customer outcomes– further discuss at next meeting. Invite Ben Birch and Travis Kauschke.	Alex/Jess	In progress
3.2	Discuss role of advisory groups and agendas – clearly articulating problems to be solved. How do we achieve outcomes. Innovation advisory group. (outcomes)	Andrew	In progress
3.3	Distribute Avenues and Stands report	Alex	In progress
3.4	Export tariffs comms plan on agenda for next meeting.	Kylie/Alex	In progress