

Tuesday 30 August 2011

“More than half a million customers linked” - ‘Self-healing’ technology -

Electricity distributor SP AusNet is celebrating the success of its Distribution Feeder Automation (DFA) technology with around 80 per cent of the network – more than half a million customers – now supplied from the technology.

SP AusNet’s Works Planning and Performance Manager, Mr Gus Frandina, applauded the milestone and said the incorporation of the Distribution Feeder Automation (DFA) technology, known as the ‘self-healing network’, continued to provide increased reliability to SP AusNet customers.

“SP AusNet is the only electricity distribution business in Australia to have such a sophisticated system in place on such a wide scale.

“This technology, which has been completely developed in-house, works hard to ensure our customers avoid long-term power outages when we have network faults, particularly during wild weather.

“The DFA technology will immediately pinpoint the section of a powerline if a fault has occurred and operates the remote-controlled switches to safely redirect the electricity around the faulted section by a supply path,” he said.

“The process is completed usually in less than 60 seconds, radically reducing the number of customers affected by a fault and also reducing the time to locate and fix the fault on the powerline.

“Historically, when faults occur on the high voltage network supplying our customers, the electricity supply would be shut down large parts of the powerline,” he said.

Mr Frandina said that DFA technology is part of SP AusNet’s multi-million dollar reliability program, aimed at improving the reliability of electricity supply to the more than 620,000 SP AusNet’s customers.

The ability to switch the network remotely has had significant effects in reducing the company’s overall average unplanned minutes off supply per customer (USAIDI).

Since DFA commenced in March 2008, SP AusNet has seen more than 300 separate DFA schemes implemented for the benefit of its customers.

“SP AusNet is extremely proud of this program and plans to continue the success of its self-healing schemes to the remaining parts of the network in the future,” Mr Frandina said.

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