
POWER LINE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE



Annual Report 2017–2018

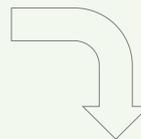


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Bartels Road Adelaide

Overview

Funding recommended for approval by PLEC during 2017-18 for the **2018-19** undergrounding program comprises:

\$6.98 million is funded by **SA Power Networks** (prescribed amount)

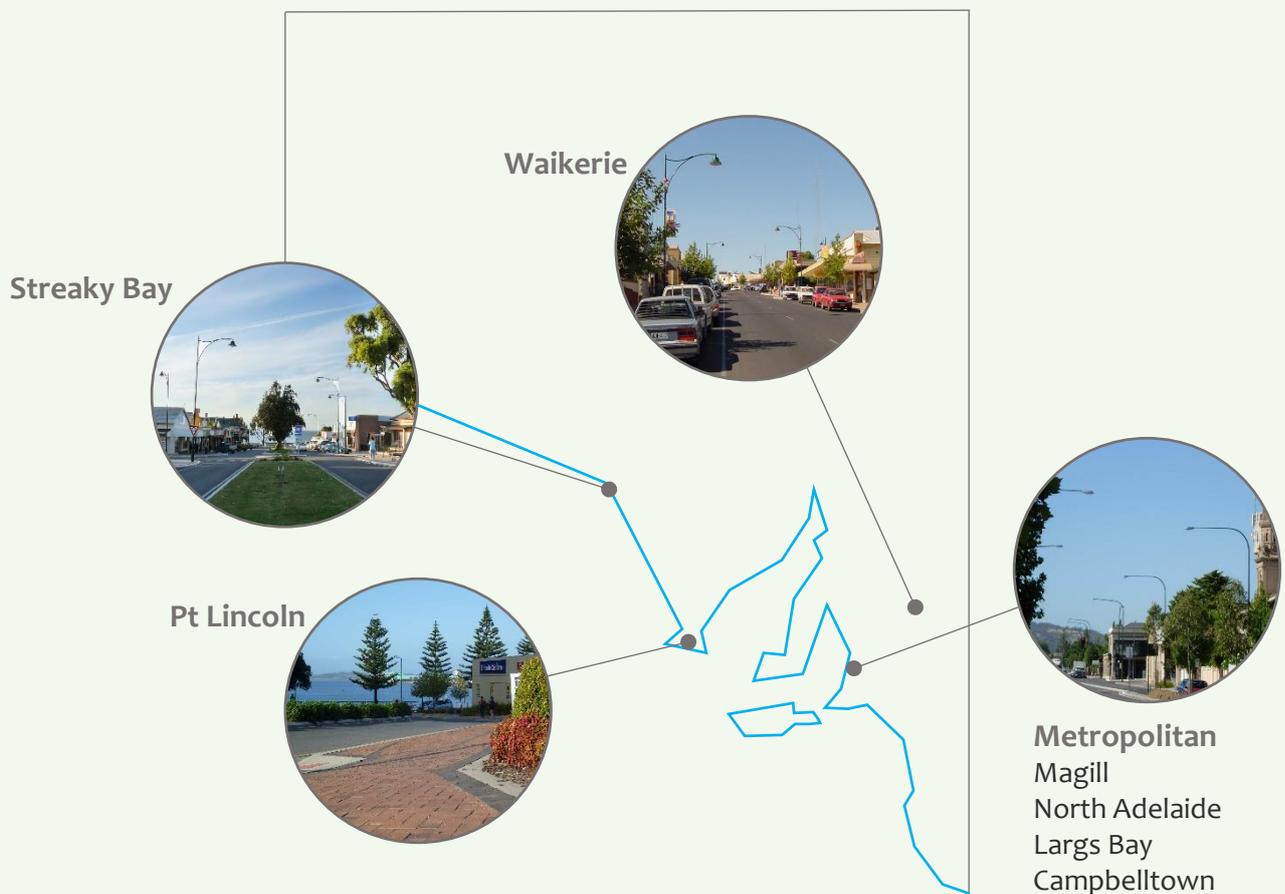
\$3.45 million is funded by **Councils**

\$10.43 million in total committed for the 2018-19 PLEC program

4.5 kilometres of power lines to be undergrounded during 2018-19



68 percent of funds for the 2018-19 program will be directed to projects in the metropolitan area and 32 percent directed to projects in regional SA



Chairman's report

1 September 2018



Hon Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP
Minister for Energy and Mining
Level 17, 25 Grenfell Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Minister

Attached is the Annual Report of the Power Line Environment Committee's (PLEC) operations for the 2017-18 financial year as required under the Charter of PLEC.

As you may be aware, in 2011, the Energy Minister delegated the powers and functions under section 58A of the Electricity Act 1996 (the Act) to the Technical Regulator, who is responsible for exercising those related functions and powers under the Act associated with the undergrounding of power lines.

Accordingly, the PLEC recommended to the Technical Regulator for approval, a program of seven projects to underground 4.5 kilometres of power lines. Those projects will be built during the 2018-19 financial year as determined under the forward-looking program schedule set out in the PLEC Charter.

SA Power Networks' contribution towards funding is \$6.98 million, which meets the funding prescribed by the Electricity Act 1996 (Act). The participating Councils' collective contribution is \$3.45 million. Seven undergrounding projects were approved of which 68 percent of funds will be directed to three projects in the metropolitan area (Magill Road, **Magill**; Jetty Road, **Largs Bay**; Jeffcott Street, **Nth Adelaide**) and 32 percent directed to three projects in regional SA (Porter Street, **Pt Lincoln**; Peake Terrace, **Waikerie**; Wells Street, **Streaky Bay**). A sum of \$581,009 was approved for additional expenditure on the existing project on Lower North East Road, **Campbelltown**, and \$82,257 was approved for SA Power Networks to carry out advance designs.

The Magill Rd project is an example of PLEC's focus on projects which benefit the greater community. As a main arterial road, the project, which is a collaborative effort between the Campbelltown and Burnside Councils, seeks to deliver an urban design that focuses on a sense of place for the benefit of the local and the wider community; including the University of South Australia's Magill Campus.

The inclusion of regional projects is also important. The latest stage of Pt Lincoln CBD, Porter and Washington Streets, marks the culmination of a long term project to underground the major overhead network in the CBD of Pt Lincoln. Only a small pocket of undergrounding remains. The City of Pt Lincoln is to be congratulated for its strategic vision. Since 1994, slightly more than \$10 million has been spent on undergrounding 6.2 kilometres of power lines in the city's CBD.

Although the significance of the above two projects is highlighted, PLEC is mindful that small projects can have a significant impact on the aesthetic improvement of local areas. For instance,

the undergrounding of the last stage of Wells Street in Streaky Bay is a small project, but the road safety improvement undertaken by Council is essential to the residential, school and tourist communities where there is a continual clash of pedestrian and vehicle activity.

Community interest in PLEC schemes remained high during the year with the majority of enquiries coming from regional Councils. This has enabled the Executive Officer to plan projects in advance which is vital as he is due to retire this year.

There was one change of membership to the Committee this year. We welcomed Mr Amit Dua to PLEC as Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) representative, following his nomination by DPTI and formal appointment by the Technical Regulator.

With the majority of the Committee being relatively new, there has been a great deal of development – in working together, understanding new terminology, assessing proposals and learning the processes undertaken in putting the undergrounding programs together for approval. Members of the Committee have contributed to robust discussions and assessment of project submissions, which has ensured the provision of excellent outcomes for local Council. I extend my personal thanks to all PLEC members for their diligence and contributions during the year.

Of special mention is the sad passing of Mr Roger Hunting, one of SA Power Networks' long-serving PLEC project team members, who was most dedicated to his work and to achieving great outcomes for PLEC. It is intended to place a memorial of some form at Bartels Road as an acknowledgement to Roger's work, as he was a network project officer in the Adelaide area for a number of years prior to his involvement with PLEC. Bartels Road was one of the last of his PLEC projects, which coincided with his love of V8 Supercar racing.

The contribution by SA Power Networks to the PLEC program is deserving of particular acknowledgement. Its staff, at all levels, have proven over a long period to be supportive and flexible in ensuring project success for all stakeholders.

PLEC is grateful for the continued support of DPTI, Telstra (and other communications companies) and of course, the proponent Councils for their continued efforts in achieving quality project outcomes. I also wish to thank the Essential Services Commission for the Secretariat support of our Executive Officer, Minute Secretaries and meeting rooms.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Hamilton', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Hamilton
Chairman
Power Line Environment Committee

2017-18: PLEC Projects recommended and approved

The Committee recommended six projects for funding approval during 2017-18. The projects, tabled below, will result in undergrounding 4.5 kilometres of power lines.

The Technical Regulator approved projects during 2017-18 that are to be constructed during 2018-19. In accordance with the Act, the prescribed funding to be contributed by SA Power Networks (two-thirds of the program funding) is \$6.98 million. Project proponents are required to contribute the remaining one-third.

The sum of \$82,257 was approved for SA Power Networks to carry out advance designs, the costs of which will be assigned to projects as they are formally submitted to PLEC.

Table – PLEC projects approved during 2017-18

Project Location	Council	\$PLEC	\$Council
Magill, Magill Road Stage 1A	Campbelltown/Burnside	\$1,843,317	\$921,659
North Adelaide, Jeffcott Street	Adelaide	\$1,508,636	\$754,318
Pt Lincoln, Porter St/Washington Stage 2	Pt Lincoln	\$705,910	\$352,955
Streaky Bay, Wells Street Stage 3	Streaky Bay	\$605,419	\$302,710
Largs Bay, Jetty Road	Pt Adelaide Enfield	\$784,913	\$392,457
Waikerie, Peake Terrace	Loxton Waikerie	\$867,539	\$433,770
Campbelltown, Lower N-E Road Stage 2A	Campbelltown	\$581,009	\$290,505
SA Power Networks (Designs)	n/a	\$82,257	
	Financial year total	\$6,979,000	\$3,448,372

The Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (**DPTI**) funding is provided for project work in accordance with funding arrangements set out in the PLEC Charter. It does not include DPTI's commitment to street lighting on projects undertaken on Council projects on roads under DPTI's jurisdiction to which it provides an annual budget of around \$750,000.

DPTI will install street lighting on the Magill Road project. DPTI has also granted permission for SA Power Networks' lighting infrastructure to be installed on the Port Lincoln project, a part of its country arterial roads network. DPTI funded the installation of public lighting for PLEC projects on its roads during 2017-18 to the value of \$274,257.

Funding over the long term

The PLEC program has delivered \$209.3 million worth of projects since it began. Over that time:

-  SA Power Networks has contributed \$135.6 million
-  Councils have collectively contributed \$65.7 million
-  DPTI has contributed \$7.9 million
-  62.4 percent has been spent in the Metropolitan area
-  37.6 percent has been spent in regional SA.

2017-18: Project construction

The following provides a brief summary of projects under construction during 2017-18.

Completed

The following projects were completed during the year:

- 📍 **Minlaton, Main Street, Stage 2**
- 📍 **Kadina, Francis Terrace**
- 📍 **Strathalbyn, Sandergrove Road Stages 1 and 2**
- 📍 **Adelaide, Bartels Road**
- 📍 **Murray Bridge, South Terrace**
- 📍 **Thebarton, Phillips Street/West Thebarton Road.**

In progress

Manningham, Hampstead Rd, Stage 5A and 5B – Both stages of this project are being undertaken simultaneously to minimise traffic interruptions at this busy location. The overall project is about 40% complete and scheduled to finish in November 2018.

Prospect, Prospect Road, Stage 5 – Delays were encountered in obtaining the street lighting design, which held up the commencement of civil work. Pole footings and side-street work is underway. Project completion is scheduled for October 2018.

Pt Lincoln, Porter/Washington Streets, Stage 1 and 2 – Both stages of this project are being constructed at the same time because of the network layout. Civil work will commence in August 2018, with an expected project completion of February 2019.

Meadows, Mawson Road Stage 3 – This project was delayed because of the timing of the delivery of an intersection design. The two stages of this project will be constructed together. Civil work will begin in August 2018.

Lower N-E Rd, Stage 1 and 2 – City of Campbelltown has begun the civil work on both stages of this project. Council is carrying out the civil work and is undertaking an accelerated program because of the long delays in resolving civil construction and design issues.

Robertson Road Stage 2 – This project has been severely delayed because of Council's difficulty in securing easement sites. It is now underway, with SA Power Networks resolving the easement locations with Council and contracting the civil work.



Completed project pictures



Google maps 2018



Undergrounding of Frances Terrace, **Kadina** (above) forms part of a bigger project to redevelop the area between the Copper Coast Highway and the central commercial area of the township. The old railway reserve, which separates the highway from the carparks and service facilities, is being upgraded as a part of the plan. One objective of the greater town plan is to address stormwater, traffic management and car parking issues. There is also a renewed focus of the town centre to enhance and accommodate the commercial, social, cultural, recreational, historic and environmental values.



West Thebarton Road, **Thebarton** (above) – before and after undergrounding. These pictures were taken from opposite ends of the project; from South Road (left) and Port Road (right)

West Thebarton Road and Phillips Street are important connector roads joining South Road and Port Road. Recent development has meant more traffic has been using these roads and, along with access needed to accommodate the growth of the Thebarton Bioscience precinct, Council is reconstructing the road and upgrading the amenity.

Completed project pictures



Sandergrove Road **Strathalbyn** - the intersection of Milnes and Sandergrove Roads at Strathalbyn, demonstrates the impact of removing the Stobie poles and overhead wires.



Main Street, **Minlaton** – Pictures adjacent and below show the improvement in the aesthetic appeal of the street following the removal of the power lines. Council is following up immediately with paving, street trees and other improvements.



A word from the Executive Officer

The Essential Services Commission of South Australia assumed the responsibility for administering PLEC in 2000 and I was fortunate to be selected as the Executive Officer PLEC at that time. From the outset, it was obvious that the calibre of Committee members, appointed by the Government, makes the Committee work.

The Committee has been Chaired by people with knowledge and experience – Hon. Roger Goldsworthy, Hon. Rosemary Crowley and current Chair, Kevin Hamilton – with the support of dedicated members, some who served for over 20 years; Dr Andrew Lothian, Ms Di Harvey and Ms Margaret Lee (still a member). The understanding and the ‘feel’ that members have as to what makes a successful project, comes from the wide-ranging experience of each member representing their area of interest. Their experience and dedication to the cause has resulted in some wonderful community spaces and streetscapes over the past 28 years. PLEC’s relationship with SA Power Networks and Councils has remained strong with well-developed working relationships.

PLEC celebrated its 15th and 25th years of operation with publications; the report “Out of sight but not out of mind” at the fifteenth year, and the addendum to the 2014-15 Annual Report, “PLEC – 25 YEARS”. These publications highlighted the spread of project expenditure across Councils and the aesthetic improvements achieved following undergrounding.

PLEC initiatives provide the space for a more appealing and safer public amenity that, as intended, benefit the greater community. Undergrounding power lines occurs more commonly on major traffic routes where the added benefit to safety is realised while also providing a more pleasant environment for road users. One only needs to travel along Pulteney Street, Unley Road and Belair Road to see the results of the participation between Adelaide, Unley and Mitcham Councils. The same can be said for Pt Adelaide Enfield and Prospect Councils in undergrounding the complete lengths of Prospect and Hampstead Roads. The majority of the metropolitan foreshore and foreshores of coastal towns have benefitted from PLEC projects.

There is continued interest in improving the state’s country towns. The major business centres of Pt Lincoln, Mt Gambier, Mt Barker and Renmark have been undergrounded in partnership with their respective Councils, all with purpose and a long-term perspective. Eye-catching towns appeal to visitors, and the aim is to encourage them to visit and stay a while to enjoy the setting. Tourism is important and is a major contributor to the regional economy.

PLEC emphasises what can be done with a relatively modest contribution from the greater community; from electricity customers, via SA Power Networks’ network tariffs, and ratepayers, through their respective Councils. On average, each electricity customer pays 16 cents per week towards PLEC funding. What has been achieved by PLEC with the available funds is remarkable.

Retiring after 18 years as the Executive Officer, I would like to thank all who have contributed to the running of PLEC over that time. In particular, SA Power Networks’ people at all levels who ensure the success of the program, especially its PLEC representative, Michael Magin, who has balanced the best interests of SA Power Networks, PLEC and Councils in delivering the program. I was saddened at the passing of Roger Hunting, SA Power Networks’ PLEC project manager, who was a skilled and dedicated colleague.

I have been most fortunate in establishing working relationships with some exceptional people along the way. PLEC is a positive initiative and the people and utilities that participate are great contributors to the better amenities that it provides.

I wish PLEC all the best for the future.

Stuart McPherson
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, PLEC

The Power Line Environment Committee

The Power Line Environment Committee (**PLEC**) was established by the South Australian Government in 1990. It provides advice to the Minister responsible for the Act in relation to the preparation of programs for power line undergrounding work pursuant to section 58A of the Act.

The Committee consists of eight members from relevant organisations and areas of community interest who are appointed for a period of up to three years. PLEC projects are funded by a contribution of two dollars from SA Power Networks for each dollar contributed by Councils. The Essential Services Commission of South Australia funds the operation of PLEC and has provided the services of an Executive Officer.

Committee appointments – The DPTI representative, Mr Alex Duerden, resigned from the Committee during the year due to work commitments. The Technical Regulator subsequently appointed **Mr Amit Dua**, who was nominated by the department as its new representative, in June 2018.

Members:

Kevin Hamilton



Chairperson
Community Representative

Joanne Davidson



South Australia Tourism
Commission Representative

Amit Dua



Department for Planning,
Transport and Infrastructure
Representative

Pam Andritsakis



Local Government Association
Representative



Michael Magin



SA Power Networks
Representative

Margaret Lee



Conservation Interests
Representative

Kim Steinle



(Deputy Chairperson)
Community Representative

Angela Crimes



Department for Environment
and Water Representative

