



SA Power Networks

Industry First Starlink Installation

Case Study



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THE INDUSTRY LEADER IN FIELD
& VEHICLE MOBILITY SOLUTIONS



SA Power Networks

SA Power Networks is the sole electricity distributor providing power to around 1.7 million customers across 180,000 km² of South Australia.

SA Power Networks manages South Australia's electricity distribution network, including poles and wires, substations, and customer connections. A significant component of this is overseeing outage management to ensure safe and reliable electricity distribution to homes and businesses.



Our Partnership

We are proud to have partnered with SA Power Networks for over 15 years providing end-to-end mobility solutions, including the supply, configuration, and installation of devices, as well as servicing and maintenance.

Our strong relationship continues as we deliver the 'Vehicle as a Node (VaaN)' solution across South Australia that will see the installation of new Starlink Flat High Performance Satellite Internet Terminals fitted to vehicles to enhance in-vehicle connectivity in regional and remote areas.



The Issue

SA Power Networks' existing satellite communication system was reaching the end of its operational lifespan, with limited ability to provide the mobile coverage required across the state. Often, field crews would need to travel great distances to find a location with enough coverage to connect to business systems to send and receive critical job-related information. This situation negatively impacted productivity, increased network outage times, and created information delays for field crews.

The planned decommissioning of the 3G network posed a further risk of reducing coverage for regional response vehicles in areas where 4G and 5G networks were not yet established, increasing the demand for an upgrade to a satellite system.



The Solution

A successful pilot project saw Advanced Mobile IT partner with Vocus to install Starlink Flat High Performance Satellite Internet Terminals in 11 regional vehicles across South Australia.

Upgrading the in-vehicle communication equipment to provide high-speed internet to regional and remote field crews enabled real-time communication, leading to increased operational efficiency, faster response times, faster restoration times, improved customer communication, and enhanced staff safety.

The project continues with the Starlink Satellite solution to be installed in more than 150 vehicles by the end of 2024.



Our Role

We played an integral role in upgrading the SA Power Networks in-vehicle connectivity project. As the supply, installation, and service partner, we worked closely with telecommunications experts Vocus, to deliver a tailored solution to meet the specific project requirements.

- ✓ We recommended the Cradlepoint R1900 router to create an extended Wifi hotspot around the vehicle to greatly enhance the Starlink Solution, along with the management platform, and external antenna to suit the functional needs of the SA Power Networks business and IT department.
- ✓ We assisted with developing a power management solution that efficiently powered the new hardware and to protect the vehicle's power system.
- ✓ We engineered a custom ladder rack bracket allowing the Starlink satellite dish to sit securely on top of the vehicle's ladder rack ensuring a direct line of sight to the sky for optimal satellite connection.



Our Client's Perspective

Mark Tate, Technology Operations Manager at SA Power Networks, said the Vocus' Satellite – Starlink solution, combined with Advanced Mobile IT's expertise in vehicle installations, has been a game-changer. “We're seeing significant improvements in real-time communication, faster restoration times, and the ability to support our communities during emergencies by staying connected.”

“We are setting a new standard in emergency response and community resilience, and it has been made possible by the seamless connectivity that low-earth orbit satellites can provide,” he said. “The Vocus and Advanced Mobile IT teams have made our ambition happen – it's been a tremendously productive partnership.”



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