New switchboard now in place at Casuarina zone substation

The $8.5 million upgrade to Casuarina zone substation reached a significant milestone today with the new multi-million state-of-the-art switchboard now in place.

The Minister for Essential Services Rob Knight said the switchboard that failed in 2008 has been fully replaced by a $1 million new switchboard.

“The Northern Territory Government’s $1.6 billion program of upgrades to the power and water network is the single largest capital works program in the history of the Territory,” Minister Knight said.

“The people of the Northern Suburbs of Darwin now have a brand new state-of-the-art switchboard – in the coming weeks the two existing temporary switchboards will be lifted out of the zone substation and it will begin to operate as normal.

“In 2008 we saw an unacceptable situation where power failed to parts of the Northern suburbs – since then each of Power and Water’s zone substations across the Territory has been thoroughly tested and are being upgraded.

“The Northern Territory Government is implementing all of the 37 recommendations out of the independent report and has invested $1.6 billion to the system up to scratch.

“Out of the 37 recommendations, 32 have been completed and the remaining 5 are being completed on an ongoing basis, including ongoing training of staff and management.”

The upgrade to Casuarina zone substation included:

- Full upgrade and replacement of the 11,000 kV switchboard that failed in late 2008 with vacuum technology now being introduced across the industry;
- Additional extra feeders to reduce the length of outages for customers and provide greater flexibility to re-route electricity around fault areas;
- Remediation of the 66,000 kV network within the substation;
- A new replacement transformer;
- Rebuilt and upgraded capacitor bank and copper busbars, which transmit the high voltage electricity within the substation; and
- Refurbished switchroom to house the new equipment.

“The Territory has some of the most extreme weather conditions and delivering power is tougher in the Territory than anywhere in Australia – over the weekend alone the greater Darwin area was hit by lightning 280 times,” Minister Knight said.

“The Casuarina zone substation upgrade has been a priority project over the last two years - Power and Water staff have worked around the clock and often on weekends to ensure this new switchboard is up and running as soon as possible; I’d like to thank all Power and Water workers for their efforts so far for all the long hours they have put in during tough weather conditions.”
“We take safety extremely seriously – the upgrade included several measures to improve safety for workers on site including better protective equipment for staff.”

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