

August 2018

ACROSS *the* LINES

Celebrating our successes!

PowerNet work group morning teas were held in May and June to acknowledge and celebrate the successes of 2017-2018.

PowerNet chief executive, Jason Franklin said staff can be proud of the many successes as a company, as teams and as individuals over the past financial year.

"Thanks to all PowerNet staff for their commitment and contributions. Whatever the workspace, whether it's been implementing safer work practices, improving our business processes or problem solving to meet customer demands, there has been some fantastic work across all of our teams," Jason said.



PowerNet Invercargill and Balclutha teams enjoying the celebration breakfast.



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Congratulations and good luck to our 2018 Annual Connection Excellence Awards finalist Joe Reti



Congratulations to PowerNet's Joseph Reti who has been selected as a finalist in the 2018 Annual Connection Excellence Awards.

Joseph, a field training officer, is a finalist in the Contributing to Investing in Youth Training and Development category.

Joseph will attend the Annual Connection Excellence Awards dinner held in conjunction with the Connexis 2018 Annual Connection competition in Christchurch in October.

PowerNet staff selected for battle with the best at Connexis Annual Connection Competitions

Nine keen PowerNet staff will be battling it out with the best of New Zealand's line mechanics and cable jointers at the Connexis 2018 Annual Connection competition being held at the Airforce Museum in Christchurch in early October.

Richie McCaw and Christchurch Helicopters will be officially opening the 2018 competition and even joining in on the first event. Other special guests will include Super 15 Rugby Coach Scott Robertson and Minister of Energy and Resources Hon Dr Megan Woods.

Two teams of line mechanics - Team Circuit and Team Breaker and one cable jointer will represent PowerNet at the competition. In three days of intense competition, the teams' skills and knowledge will be tested in events that include a pole-top rescue, team building, first-aid a pit rescue and a spike gun event.

Team members are nominated before final selections are made by PowerNet's Operations leaders.

"Our teams are put together from multiple depots and there's a clear purpose behind this. It shows our people can work together in different groups and it accelerates sharing best practice," says PowerNet's chief operating officer, Michelle Henderson.

"This year's competition promises to be challenging and exciting. As always, it aims to showcase the industry's very best," she says.

"We're proud to once again enter teams from PowerNet. They include some fantastic staff who are dedicated, highly-skilled and knowledgeable. We wish them all the very best."

In-house training for the event covers safety, fitness, best industry practice and mental ability to work under time pressure.

"Everyone involved from the organiser, internal and external trainers, suppliers and the team themselves are committed and dedicated to ensuring a successful event representing PowerNet," Michelle says.

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Our Connexis 2018 Annual Connection competitors

Team Circuit



Shane Lawson, Distribution line mechanic team leader - Onslow depot

Shane lives in Bluff and began working for Power Services Ltd in 2007 before it became part of PowerNet. Based at the Onslow depot, most of the work Shane's team does involves new connections and overhead and underground line maintenance. He is a certified distribution line mechanic Level 5.

"I like the outdoor nature of the job and the diversity, you rarely do the same job two days in a row. The most satisfying thing for me is building a good team environment where my team can look forward to coming to work and enjoy being there. As far as the competition goes, I'm looking forward to meeting up with lines staff, friends and familiar faces from across the country who I've met at previous comps. Most of all, I'm looking forward working together and building our team during our training weeks to eventually compete and support our other Powernet team."



Jackson Unahi, Distribution line mechanic - Onslow depot

A Level 4 line mechanic, Jackson has worked with PowerNet since 2015, both in Winton (where he's from) and Invercargill.

"I like working outdoors, not stuck in an office, and seeing what you have completed. The industry is always changing and there are opportunities to learn new ways of doing things. I'm looking forward to putting the skills I have gained from working for PowerNet to use in the competition. It will be interesting to experience a different work environment from my normal work environment."



Guy Holden, Line mechanic - Balclutha

Level 4 line mechanic Guy Holden has been with PowerNet since 2014. He completed his training while working at the Balclutha depot.

"I like the variety of work and the variety in the places we go to. I'm looking forward to seeing different ways of completing tasks and meeting new people at the Connexis competition."



Paul Ashby, Trainee line mechanic - Gore depot

Paul is based at the Gore Depot and has worked for PowerNet for two years. A Level 2 certified line mechanic, Paul enjoys the variety and challenges that his role brings.

"I like learning new things and taking the initiative on jobs. I'm looking forward to the competition to see what events they have in store this year."

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Our Connexis 2018 Annual Connection competitors

Team Breaker



Warren Dobson, Depot supervisor - Ranfurly depot

Born and bred in the Ranfurly area, Warren has worked at the Ranfurly Depot since 1998 where he trained as a qualified live line mechanic. He supervises and organises the day-to-day work of two crews in Ranfurly and Palmerston.

"Working in this industry means there's always a change in work locations and its great being outside on a nice day."



Joel Lee, Distribution line mechanic - Lumsden depot

A Balfour local, Joel is a qualified line mechanic with a full Network Access Competency. He has worked for PowerNet since 2014 and is based at the Lumsden Depot.

"What I like most about my role is the work we do. It's so different from other jobs and we are constantly learning and working things out. Faults can be challenging at times but are great learnings. Operating cranes and bucket trucks is good fun and we see a lot of cool country side. I'm looking forward to the comps because it's something that will challenge me in competing to the best of my abilities and also learning new skills and tricks. It will be cool to see how other companies work and operate and meeting new people will be good!"



Samantha Maurangi, Distribution line mechanic - Onslow depot

Samantha joined PowerNet in 2015 and is based at the Onslow depot. She is a qualified line mechanic with an F endorsement, class 2 licence and traffic management certificate. Originally from the Cook Islands, Sam has lived in Invercargill most of her life.

"I enjoy the variety in the work that we do. Every day is different. Job satisfaction for me is completing a job and walking away from it with pride, knowing the job is done well and it looks good. I'm looking forward to having an enjoyable time at the competition and maybe winning this time."



Michael Blair, Trainee line mechanic - Palmerston depot

Originally from Palmerston, Michael began working for Otago Power Services in 2006 as a trainee utility arborist. For the past year he's been training further as a line mechanic.

"I like the fact this job offers different types of work in different locations. I like seeing jobs finished and left tidy. As far as the competition goes, I'm looking forward to working with new people, learning new skills and seeing how other companies work."

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Our Connexis 2018 Annual Connection competitors

Cable Jointer



Paul Barclay, Cable jointer - Racecourse Road

A born and bred Southlander, Paul started in the industry as an adult apprentice with Decom in 2005 qualifying as an electrician in 2010. He started work at Power Services (later PowerNet) a year later, where he gained a national L4 cable jointing certificate, advanced 33kv cable jointing registration and L4 field switching certificate. He has a senior role in the technical team based at Racecourse Road and has been replacing underground substations and relocating link boxes in Invercargill's Central Business District.

"The best part of my job is the work I do and the people I get to work with. The variety is great, you're not in the same place for long and you're all over Southland. I like seeing the old, dated equipment getting replaced with new, safer, user-friendly equipment and it gives me great satisfaction that the work I do will be there, servicing the city for years to come."

"I competed in the cable jointing competition in 2013 and 2014 in Christchurch. I really enjoy the challenge, meeting other guys from different networks and seeing how they do things. It's also a great opportunity to see emerging technology as a lot of our suppliers have it all on display."

Support Team



Roy Duffin, Outage planning manager - Racecourse Road. Supporting Team Circuit

Roy started work with Southland Electric Power Supply in Winton as a trainee linesman in 1977. He has moved through the ranks to take on his current role, which includes coordinating and managing the release of equipment, managing outages and working with System Control to ensure the networks operate smoothly. Originally from Invercargill, Roy has also worked in Winton and Lumsden.

"What I like about working in our industry is both the people and the work we do. In relation to the Connexis competition, I'm looking forward to developing a team that can compete with the best in New Zealand. It's also a great chance to connect with like-minded people from this industry."



Mike Johnston, Depot supervisor, Te Anau depot. Supporting Team Breaker

Mike has worked at the Te Anau depot for about 12 years, after training in Oamaru with Network Waitaki. A certified distribution line mechanic, his role is supervising linework and faults.

"I enjoy coaching and mentoring staff for a safe efficient outcome and helping out customers for the best result possible. I'm looking forward to working with staff from other depots at the line comp and picking up some new ideas that may help staff in the future."



Jordan Coutts, Supply electrician - Racecourse Road. Cable Jointer Support

Jordan began working for PowerNet in 2014 and is based at Racecourse Road, Invercargill. His work mostly involves cable repairs, EIL projects and maintenance. Born and bred in Invercargill, he began his training at Transfield Services and later registered as a supply electrician while working at PowerNet.

"I really enjoy our work, especially the fault work. I'm not competing but am looking forward to seeing my workmate Paul Barclay rip into some cables in the jointing side of the competition."

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Young farmers challenged by PowerNet safety module

PowerNet's involvement in the 2018 FMG Young Farmer of the Year Competition in July helped set a high standard of competition and create awareness around crucial safety protocols.

Seven grand finalists tackled a PowerNet Farm Safety module as part of the technical side of the three-day competition.

The module was run with Wilson Contracting and required each competitor to undertake a pre-start equipment check and sight inspection before digging a trench and laying field tiles under a 'live' overhead wire. The curveball? One wire would unexpectedly fall on top of the digger, leaving the competitor to decide the safest action.

Competitors were judged on their ability to navigate safety protocols as well as their technical skill across the 30-minute challenge.

PowerNet field training officer Joseph Reti enjoyed being involved in the prestigious event as a judge and watching the scenario play out for each contestant.

"They found it very interesting and very valuable. If it had been a real situation, two would have made fatal errors. Everyone certainly took away some potentially life-saving learnings and a heightened awareness of the dangers when working near power lines," Joe said.

Earlier this year the PowerNet safety communication group identified a primary target audience of '30-65 year old males working in rural areas' for its messaging aimed to reduce network asset incidents involving members of the public.

"In our region, farmers in particular are at risk of incidents involving overhead and underground lines. The Young Farmers event provided us with a great opportunity to reach this audience and start a conversation about it," Joe said.

Following the successful day of competition, the PowerNet health and safety team now look forward to strengthening its relationship with New Zealand's leading rural insurer FMG and looking at shared opportunities to help promote rural safety messages.



Above: Various photos of the 2018 Young Farmer of the Year Competition.

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New work space for Onslow depot technical team

PowerNet technical staff now have a new work space in the Lockwood building on Racecourse Road.

The 27-strong technical team moved to the refurbished former PowerNet offices behind the company existing office from the Onslow depot in July.

In total, 39 staff now work out of the building which was already home to seven health and safety staff, two human resources staff and three meter installers.

PowerNet's infrastructure and administration manager, Claire Wallis said the building was partially altered before staff moved in.

"There's an equipment storage room for specialist gear and redesigned and upgraded bathroom facilities," Claire said.

Traffic flow through the yard has also been altered to improve safety and allow parking spaces for the 25 vehicles that now operate from the building.

"Staff will have easier access to the technical workshop and oil handling facility at Racecourse Road, where some maintenance work is carried out. They'll also have closer access to engineers and system control," Claire said.

The Onslow depot will still be used for equipment storage, light engineering work and to maintain working relationships with the distribution team.



*Above: Technical project managers/supervisors office.
Below: Technical/field services workspace.*



Health and wellbeing review

The outcomes of a recent independent Health and Wellbeing review at PowerNet will be used to help establish a more focused programme around the company's health and wellbeing offerings.

The review was conducted by occupational medicine specialist Dr David Beaumont of Cromwell. His findings showed that while PowerNet has an impressive range of offerings for staff, as a package, they were contributing little health promoting behaviours.

PowerNet general manager people, culture and communication Marcus Waters said the review results provide a good call to action.

"We have a greater understanding now of what initiatives are most important and beneficial within the workplace. From here, we can explore what we could be doing differently to ensure the best outcomes," he said.

Marcus and chief financial officer Greg Buzzard plan to meet with staff over the coming months to discuss Dr Beaumont's findings before beginning to design the new programme.

"Wellbeing is a broadly used term that means different things to different people, so first we need to arrive at consensus. It's important we do this in a considered fashion so we're well set up for the future."

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Better remote control one step closer

More reliable remote control of Oreti Valley substations is one step closer with the completion of stage one of the High Peak communications tower project.

Stage one involved relocating Hedgehope Repeater communications links to the High Peak site, situated on the hills west of Gore.

PowerNet project manager, Roger Scott said PowerNet will now install a Portacom radio hut and a support frame for up to three microwave dishes at the site.

"These dishes will become the backbone for the microwave network linking system control to substations in the Oreti Valley, in particular the Winton, Centre Bush, Dipton, Lumsden and Mossburn substations."

"High Peak will be the key to improving the reliability of remotely controlling these substations from system control," Roger said.

Originally owned by Woosh, PowerNet bought the communications tower's existing assets - the lattice tower and outdoor cabinet in 2017.

Gore District Council has granted resource consent for stage 2 and investigation works have started. The project is expected to be completed by March 2019.



High Peak communications tower, West of Gore.

Staff survey

The PowerNet 'Our Say, Our Future' staff survey that was conducted company-wide in April has provided some great insights into the workings of the company.

The online survey asked a range of questions and covered topics such as business improvement, strategy, leadership, work culture, project management and communication.

PowerNet general manager, people, culture and communication Marcus Waters was pleased with the effort and honesty of the responses. He said the results highlighted areas the company is excelling in and those that can be improved upon.

"It's been great to see that generally employees enjoy working for PowerNet and their immediate leader. Of course, there are areas to work on too, such as communication and planning processes," he said.

Marcus believes it's important to now prioritise the "wealth of information" that the survey results have provided. The first step will be for senior managers to communicate and discuss the results with their teams. From there, gaining a better understanding into any key areas of concern would be a priority.

"A survey bulletin has been distributed to all employees and will update everyone as to what actions are being prioritised in response to the survey feedback and keep people informed as we work through these actions."



Marcus Waters.

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AED donations that keep our communities safer



L/R: PowerNet Chief Financial Officer Greg Buzzard (PowerNet), Invercargill Bowling Club Joe Ineson, Paul Connell, Pam Calder, Karen Arnold (EIL), Bob Glassey and Paul Colvin (St John).



L/R: Rachael Watt and Lyndon Whale (PowerNet) presenting the AED to Michelle Bridson (The Whistling Frog) with Tania Walker and Ken Barton (St John).

Two more automated external defibrillators (AEDs) have been donated to Southland communities over the past few months.

An AED has been gifted to the Invercargill Bowling Club and the Whistling Frog Café at Papatowai in the Catlins. PowerNet presented the AEDs on behalf of Electricity Invercargill Ltd and The Power Company Ltd.

AED donations are part of the three-year sponsorship between PowerNet and St John. The sponsorship agreement includes the annual gift of AEDs to communities on behalf of electricity network owners. All donated AEDs are housed in locations that are accessible to the public, as this may mean the difference between life and death. Level 1 first-aid training sessions are also provided by PowerNet as part of the sponsorship.

PowerNet attends Canterbury University's career day

Late in July, PowerNet's graduate engineer, Ben Williams and general manager people, culture and communication, Marcus Waters attended the University of Canterbury 'Connecting to your Future' career day.

This was run by the Electric Power Engineering Centre (EPE) which is a joint initiative between the electricity industry and University of Canterbury to promote excellence in electric power engineering.

Ben said it was a great opportunity to connect with students and to promote PowerNet and its intern opportunities.

He believes the EPE Centre acts as an excellent bridge between the University and the industry.

"By attending, PowerNet can easily engage with future engineers and attract upcoming graduates. The exposition is also a great opportunity for students to gain assistance with choosing their career or study paths and to be provided with a wide range of recruitment possibilities."



Ben Williams with two Canterbury University students.

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Girls with Hi-Vis

A number of Southland women were inspired by the thought of a career in 'hi-vis' when PowerNet hosted its second Girls with Hi-Vis® event in June.

The initiative is led by Ultimit – Women in Infrastructure through Connexis. It allows women across the country opportunities to gain hands on experience in the infrastructure and energy sectors.

Nationwide, females only account for about four percent of employees in the infrastructure industries. PowerNet general manager people, culture and communication Marcus Waters said women make up about 20 percent of PowerNet's workforce.

"There are many benefits to diversity in the workplace across all aspects and we are making some great progress with the number of women employees. Participating in the Girls with Hi-Vis initiative gives us another opportunity to open our doors to women and provide a glimpse into some of the exciting career opportunities we have here," he said.

PowerNet people capability and development advisor Faye McLeod organised the event that attracted 18 Southland women through promotion in high schools, training institutions and word of mouth.

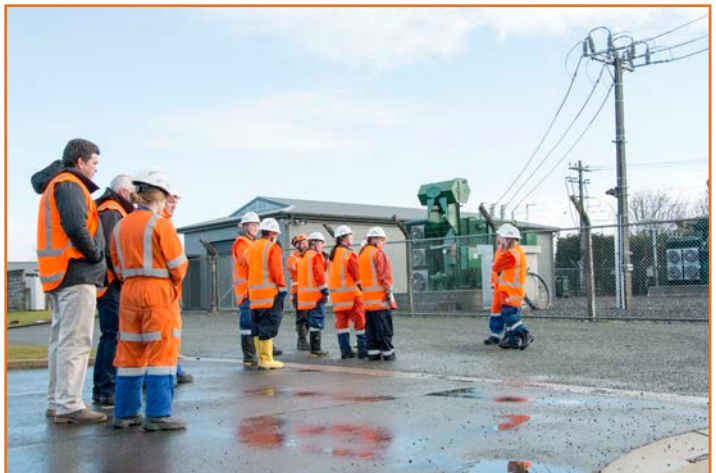
She said the "action packed day" included a building and system control room tour, staff presentations, using field and technical equipment and inspecting poles on the training site via the elevated work platform (EWP).

"They always have a great time and become inspired hearing the staff speak about how they started out and how they got to where they are now in their careers. The tour gives them an appreciation of the work that's done here and of course, the hands-on experience of using the EWP is a highlight for many," she said.

PowerNet was one of around 20 companies nationwide to take part in Girls with Hi-Vis this year. Stephen Griffiths from Connexis was particularly impressed with PowerNet's commitment to showcasing its business and raise awareness of its career opportunities through the event.

"PowerNet put on a very successful day promoting opportunities for women in the industry. The event was well planned and executed with an excellent turn out from key management and a very motivated group of women in attendance. A sure highlight was the announcement of several vacancies and, consequently, expressions of interest from many of the participants," he said.

A video of the day can be found at www.powernet.co.nz/carers and more information, including profiles of successful women in the industry, can be found at www.connexis.org.nz/careers/girls-high-vis/



Above: Photos of the 2018 Girls with Hi-Vis day.

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Industry profiles

Meet some of the successful women working in a male dominated industry.

Carol Lowe
Operations (Distribution)
project manager
Started at PowerNet 2015



What do you do day-to-day at work, and who do you work with?

I am one of several people that produce maintenance job packs that the line mechanics work in the field. I work with mostly men, but it's heartening to see some other women working with the guys too, like Lisa, Samantha, Lone and Jess.

What do you think it takes to be a successful female in a male dominated industry?

Determination and good humour. When I started out nearly 20 years ago, a woman had to be much better at the job than the men filling the same job. We had to prove it every single day.

What career path led you here?

After holding many odd jobs, from a pizza delivery driver to carpenter, I decided to go to uni and graduated with a Bachelor in Electrical Engineering. Three weeks after graduation I got a job as a distribution design engineer in Chicago, that was January 2000. From there I was a motor control designer at a Siemens plant, a distribution designer at a consulting company in Overland Park Kansas, then senior electrical engineer II facilities at an Air Force base in Australia. That position was the most exhausting, challenging and rewarding position I have ever had.

Did you face any challenges along the way?

My journey here has been far from a straight line and far from easy. The biggest challenge to overcome in the US was a bias against blonde women having anything even resembling intelligence.... so, I have spent most of my career as a brunette!

What's your personal background?

I came from the US, I have family in southern Canada and my dad was in the US Marines but I spent most of my childhood in southern Iowa. After working in a number of jobs both there and in Australia I went looking for a better way to live and I moved to Southland in 2015 from Saint Louis Missouri.

What motivates you to come to work each day?

The people I work with are good. The income is good. The area is great and I am working in what I love, electricity distribution.

Lone Pau
Line mechanic
Started at PowerNet 2015



What does your job entail?

As a distribution line mechanic, my general duties include working aloft in Elevated Work Platforms, operating heavy machinery and installing, maintaining and replacing poles and structures. This includes operating on overhead and underground equipment while it's in service. Like most line mechanics, I am also on an after-hours faults roster to respond to unexpected outages, this can be a challenge at times but is very rewarding.

Are there many other women in your area of work?

It's mostly men. I'm one of just two females in a group of about 25 line mechanics at my depot and I'm usually the only female in my crew five.

How did you get involved in this industry?

A few years after leaving high school early, I realised I needed a career path. I did NZQA level 1,2 and 3 via correspondence and various courses including small business and vet nursing but it wasn't until I gave electrical engineering a go through SIT that I found something I was really interested in. I especially enjoyed the hands on aspect and even got top of my class! After that I got a job in telecommunications installing fibre and was always given the aerial jobs as I found them the most enjoyable and I still do in my work today.

What keeps you coming back to your job, day after day?

The people I get to work with, and the fact that every day is continuous learning; but the main reason I'll continue in the industry is because I enjoy it.

What advice do you have for women wanting to get into this industry?

I don't believe it's about being male or female, it's the type of person you are. Plus, people are a lot more open minded about women in the industry now, and if not, prove them wrong!

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Samantha Maurangi
Line mechanic
Started at PowerNet 2015



What led you to your role as a line mechanic at PowerNet?

I was enrolled in the Electrical Pre-trade course at SIT, aiming to become a sparky to be able to one day wire my family home in Rarotonga when we rebuild there. One of my tutors told me about the Girls with Hi-Vis event that PowerNet was hosting and encouraged me to register. I found it really interesting and was lucky enough to be selected to attend the Celebration of Women in Infrastructure Award ceremony at Te Papa. I met a lot of inspiring women there and decided to pursue a career in the energy industry.

What is the best part about your job?

I love that every day is different. I also get to work outdoors and see places I never knew existed that are so close to home.

What are your career goals?

I qualified in March this year which was my main goal, and now there is still so much more for me to learn. There's so much to being a line mechanic that you learn something new nearly everyday. My goal for now is to keep learning and become confident in my skills.

What do you think it takes to be a successful female in a male dominated industry?

I try not to think about the fact that it is a male dominated industry. I don't believe gender affects your abilities and what you can bring to the job. It's more about being confident in yourself as an individual.

How do you find managing your career with family life?

I am a single mother of one beautiful nine year old girl. There are a few minor challenges I face when work and taking care of my daughter sometimes clash. However, I am pretty lucky that my co-workers and family are very supportive.

What advice do you have for women wanting to get into this industry?

No matter what job you get in the world there will be ups and downs so don't think about what might go wrong or what might not work. Don't think about 'what if's'. Don't doubt yourself. If you want it, then go for it. You won't know until you try.

Shrutika Chavan System controller
Started at PowerNet 2017



What's your role at PowerNet?

I am part of the system control team and my major responsibilities are operating our system control operations using Supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA), managing faults response, planned and unplanned network outages and carrying out and directing switching operations on the network.

How did start out in this industry?

I graduated as a Power Engineer and worked at a power station in India for almost five years. During this time I enjoyed my work and got hands on experience, hence I wanted to continue in the same industry after moving to New Zealand in 2016.

Did you face any challenges along the way?

My biggest challenge so far was learning to understand various accents while communicating with field staff, customers and my team.

Your team mates are all male, what do you think it takes to be a successful female in a male dominated industry?

I think self-confidence is the most important quality, irrespective of the industry.

What advice do you have for other women wanting to get into this industry?

Many women successfully perform different roles in this industry, from field work to office jobs. To be successful, it's important to believe in yourself and to be prepared to work hard.

What is the best thing about your job?

Every day is different and sees different problems and challenges. There is always something to learn.

What's your career goal?

I aim to gain qualification and experience as a system controller and then I'll explore other options within the electrical supply industry for a managerial role.

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Keeping people warm for 10 years

The Southland Warm Homes Trust (SWHT) celebrated a decade of keeping Southland and West Otago people warm at a special stakeholder morning tea in June.

Since the Trust was established in 2008, more than 6,000 homes in Southland and West Otago have been insulated or retrofitted with its financial support.

The SWHT was established in 2008 by Electricity Invercargill Ltd and the Southland Electric Power Supply Consumer Trust as an umbrella group to drive a Southland-wide initiative to provide warm, insulated homes.

Trust chair Jim Hargest said the Trust's vision to ensure Southlanders have more energy efficient homes, an improved living environment and well-being, better health and greater energy efficiency awareness, continues today.

"The Trust has had a real and positive impact on the health and well-being of our communities and that's something we're really proud of," he said.

Since 2008 SWHT has received more than \$18 million of funding from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's (EECA) Healthy Homes scheme and from third-party funding.

"We're very grateful for the EECA funding and for the successful and supportive local funding partnerships we enjoy, particularly with Electricity Invercargill Ltd and The Power Company Ltd, and also with our territorial local authorities and others.

"The Southland Warm Homes Trust represents a truly collaborative 'Southland-wide' effort. Many regional organisations have supported it and many people's lives have been changed for the better," Jim said.

Funding under the EECA Healthy Homes Programme has been targeted to those who benefit most from having their homes insulated such as low-income households with high health needs, families with children and the elderly.

A new EECA insulation programme named Warmer Kiwi Homes is due to start 1st October, with prospects of the Trust continuing this work for a further four years. Once confirmed, home owners that meet the criteria will receive a 92 percent subsidy on the cost of insulating their home through contributions from SWHT (25 percent) and EECA (67 percent).



L-R: Jim Hargest and Neil Boniface.

PowerNet staff assist in first-aid training



Participants from Southland Disabilities Enterprises enjoyed a fun first-aid learning day at the St John training hub in Invercargill in August.

PowerNet team members Rachel Saunders, Ash Naicker, Maree Fyffe, Faye McLeod and Kathryn McCoy helped provide basic first-aid training to the group.

Kathryn said the four hours training was enjoyed by everyone and that it was a rewarding experience for the five PowerNet volunteers.

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The nuts and bolts of consumable stock

Following the recent ordering system integration through Maximo with Corys Electrical, PowerNet depots are now holding some low-value, high-use consumable items on hand. The items, such as nuts, bolts and tape are available onsite for distribution staff to use while all other items continue to be ordered by the project managers.

A team of PowerNet staff from Balclutha has developed a storage and labelling system for consumable stock and a reordering system has been created with the help of a phone app. These systems are set to be replicated and used across all depots in the near future.



Above: The new storage and labelling system.

NER installation update

The installation of neutral earthing resistors (NERs) at zone substations is improving safety by limiting earth fault currents.

PowerNet major projects manager Dave Tose said 30 NERs have now been installed on 11kV networks — four on the Electricity Invercargill Ltd (EIL) network, two on OtagoNet (OJV) and 24 on The Power Company Ltd (TPCL).

“We’ve eight more to install on the TPCL network and 12 more to install on OJV. On EIL, we’ve only some minor protection upgrades to do at some installed sites to finish the work,” Dave said.

NERs introduce a resistance between the neutral and earth, which reduces any earth fault current. This significantly reduces the earth potential rise which may appear on and around network equipment when an earth fault occurs, lessening the voltage to levels unlikely to cause harm to staff or the public.

The installation of NERs is required to comply with EEA Guide to Power System Earthing Practice 2009. Installation is expected to be completed across all networks by March 2022.



Dave Tose.

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Action-packed ambulance shift

PowerNet chief operating officer Michelle Henderson had an eye-opening and action-packed experience when she joined the Saturday night shift crew at St John Invercargill recently.

The opportunity for an observer to experience the ambulance work first hand arose through PowerNet's sponsorship arrangement with St John.

Michelle jumped at the chance and, although she began her shift with some nerves, she was soon ready for action - dressed in uniform (labelled 'Observer') and armed with a pager and radio.

Michelle's duties included restocking the ambulance and first response backpack and carrying the monitor and tablet for patient notes. These roles were not to be underestimated. Throughout the 7pm-7am shift the crew responded to seven calls (including one under lights out to Winton) and took five people to hospital - all with only two short rests at the station.

Michelle said the officers she worked with were calm, experienced and caring.

"You can tell that they love what they do. I also saw the huge gratitude on the face of the patients once they felt they were going to be ok. People are so vulnerable and St John staff are amazing. I'm so pleased I had this experience."

And, Michelle's takeaway message for you?

"Please pullover to let the ambulance pass!"



Michelle Henderson.

New poster shares the vision

Look out for a new Operations team poster on a wall near you!

The recently 'refreshed' poster defines the Operations team's vision, critical success factors and values.

The new poster is relevant to all areas of Operations such as technical, distribution, control room and the planning and project management teams. These teams had different general managers in 2016 but their roles and teams were combined under chief operating officer, Michelle Henderson.

"With these changes, it was an opportune time to refresh our team poster. It reflects PowerNet's overarching vision and is very relevant to all our Operations staff", says Michelle.

ACROSS^{the}LINES

Better work practices projects

A new working group has been formed to manage process and system improvements for the distribution teams at PowerNet. Business improvement manager Rachael Watt leads the group, which consists of 12 representatives from across PowerNet's distribution, administration and IT departments.

The group's first outcome was reinstating regular planning meetings for PowerNet representatives from connections, distribution, field, arborist, technical, scheduling and outage planning services. The aim of the monthly meeting is to share knowledge and resources as well as planning collective efficiencies such as achieving multiple pieces of work during planned outages.

The working group has also been reviewing the job packs created by project managers for the teams in the field. To help ensure all job packs are consistent a new Work Order Detail Report has been developed which includes information about the job, the customer and electrician (if applicable), a check sheet for field preparation and completion, a summary of the budgeted costs as well as detailed materials, labour, plant, tools and services lists.

Protecting ourselves from inadvertent livening



Work continues to fine-tune the insulated equipment that makes working with electrical lines safer.

All PowerNet staff who are exposed to the risk of inadvertent livening have now been issued with specially-insulated yellow dielectric boots that improve safety in situations where an electric shock could occur.

However, as general manager health, safety, environment and quality Justin Peterson points out, dielectric boots and gloves are not a 'one size fits all' solution.

"Our field teams have provided some really constructive feedback. They've accepted the use of the insulated boots and gloves where there is a risk of inadvertent livening. However, comfort is an ongoing challenge in hot conditions and working off ladders can be hard on people's feet," Justin said.

A group of engineering, Health, Safety and Environment and field staff are working through options for potential changes by trialling different kinds of electrical hazard boots and looking into other equipotential zone applications.

"They are doing a great job of trying to get the best options available so the equipment does the best job of protecting staff but is also comfortable."

Business Management System overhaul

A large project is underway to combine and align PowerNet's current document management, quality management and Promapp systems into an overall business management system framework.

As part of the project, a series of workshops were held to gather helpful feedback and information from end users. As a result, the finished product will offer greater consistency of architecture, folder structure, naming conventions and document rules. This will enable staff to find information, such as policy, process or network standards, much more easily. Further workshops will be held in the coming months as the work continues.

ACROSS *the* LINES

Lumsden milestone achieved

Lumsden substation is nearing completion of stage 1. On a frosty but stunning Southland day in late July the control room and communications tower were lifted onto the Lumsden site. This paves the way for the commissioning of stage 1 from the 66kV Dipton line scheduled for 11 October 2018.



Human Resource presentation well received

PowerNet chief operations officer, Michelle Henderson presented to the Invercargill branch of Human Resource Institute of New Zealand recently.



Michelle spoke of the significant Human Resource (HR) support she has received throughout her career. Feedback from the audience of local HR professionals and employers was that it was great to have a business leader providing insights to the added value HR can have in enabling and supporting proactive strategies.

Balclutha staff apply 5S system ahead of new office build

When PowerNet first took on board the '5S system', it was known that it would make the workplace more organised, safe, visual, efficient and productive. What wasn't known, was that the modern system would one day provide the decision-making framework for handling documents dating back nearly 80 years.

While clearing out the Balclutha office in preparation for the new office development, staff stumbled across an old safe with large amounts of historic information inside such as maps, railway crossings, plans, easements and legal documents.

Subsequently, Kayla Dent has come on board as a casual administrator to systematically scan and save the information with meaningful metadata so it can be easily referred to in the future. The original documents will be archived off-site.

As well as the safe, some unused storage cabinets and desks were identified around the office and have since found new homes. The field teams have also been clearing the yard and workshops, and relocating their equipment and materials in preparation for the new build which is due to start early 2019.

Live line hot stick training



Nowadays the live line hot stick method is rarely used, but the training is a requirement for all those undertaking glove and barrier work in New Zealand.

Two PowerNet linesmen completed live line hot stick training in May as part of their competency framework.

Across a two week training course, Mase Salesa and Alan Kelbrick (pictured left to right) from the Onslow Street depot covered off live line theory and written assessments along with

real-world exercises and practical tasks to safely carry out hot stick work.

Live line hot stick maintenance is a method of performing high voltage live line work up to 33,000 volts using tools and equipment mounted on insulated sticks, with the line mechanic maintaining minimum approach distances from energised components.

ACROSS *the* LINES

Mobility in the Field

A pilot project has been set up to look at options to connect PowerNet field teams with back-office information to help make a smooth transition from paper-based to electronic systems.

The project is named 'Mobility in the Field' and its team members are Tim Brown, Justin Peterson, AJ Cross, Richard Lee, Jim Matheson, Waric Cross, Mark Zwies and business improvement manager Rachael Watt.

Rachael said as part of the project some of the PowerNet inspection team had been using an app to gather inspection data.

"This has been very successful in the field and now we have work underway to integrate our systems to allow efficient data flow into our Maximo system," she said.

The next stage of the pilot project is to provide selected team members and leaders with a tablet that downloads useful up-to-date information such as maps, schematics and diagrams.

PowerNet is also one of several businesses signed up to be part of Smartrak's 'Project Atlas'.

PowerNet chief information officer Tim Brown said the aim of Project Atlas is to get input from users as they develop the software, so it was timely to make it part of the 'Mobility in the Field' project.

"This joint industry project from a field information provider encourages input from team members on how they can use Smartrak to make their field work easier," Tim said.

Progress will be tracked to help determine the roadmap, driving and trialling innovation in both fleet management and mobile worker health and safety.

This project will continue until December 2019.

PowerNet and Network Waitaki align

A goal to more closely align PowerNet's Network Access Certificate (NAC) and Network Waitaki's network authorisations is underway following a proposal for PowerNet system control to service Waitaki's operations.

Network Waitaki Contracting operation co-ordinator and workplace assessor Paul Allan has been familiarising himself with PowerNet's training documentation and processes, and gathering information needed to align the two networks.

As part of the project Paul has developed training programmes for Network Waitaki NAC holders, including third party contractors, and has completed 'Train the Trainer' trainings for conducting NAC programmes.

Looking ahead, Paul will be moving from the operations side of the business to a more permanent role of workplace assessing and training. Having another assessor in the region will assist both PowerNet and Network Waitaki with the integration of the control room and provide backup when competency training is required.



Paul Allan.



Congratulations

Congratulations to PowerNet chief operating officer, Michelle Henderson for gaining her certification as a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors in May. Presenting Michelle her certificate is Institute of Directors Branch Committee member, Duncan Fea.

ACROSS *the* LINES

Southern Scenic Route signals an electric future

The Southern Scenic Route is planning for an electric future with funding confirmed for electric vehicle chargers on the Southern highway.

Energy and Resources Minister Hon Dr Megan Woods recently announced co-funding for a Southern Scenic Route application and 18 other projects under the fourth round of the Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund.

The funding will result in eight electric vehicle chargers being installed along the Southern Scenic Route with locations likely to include Owaka, Papatowai, Waikawa, Tokanui, Riverton, Tuatapere, Manapouri and Te Anau.

A regional partnership between PowerNet, ChargeNet and Venture Southland led to the preparation of the application which has resulted in \$164,500 of funding for the region.

ChargeNet chief executive officer Steve West said the funding announcement supported the company's goal of removing barriers to electric vehicle adoption and use.

"The funding will ensure that one of New Zealand's most stunning, and popular, tourist routes will soon be able to be enjoyed by electric vehicle drivers - both tourists and locals alike," Steve said.

Venture Southland group manager for business and strategic projects Steve Canny said the partnership with PowerNet and ChargeNet had ensured the application had wider industry support.

"The success of the application shows a regional proactive approach for sustainable and energy efficient initiatives," he said.

Steve Canny said the funding will support electrified transport along the major tourism route and connect to existing infrastructure in the area.

PowerNet chief executive Jason Franklin said a key element in encouraging growth in electric vehicle uptake in New Zealand is increasing the availability of fast-charging infrastructure.

PowerNet is committed to promoting sustainable energy across the region and will be supplying the infrastructure required for the eight fast chargers.

"We manage significant network assets across Southland and Otago and envisage some major changes taking place as more people transition from fossil fuel vehicles to electric," Jason said.

Installation of the proposed chargers will be rolled out over the coming months.

The Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund is administered by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and aims to encourage innovation and investment in electric and low emission vehicles in New Zealand.



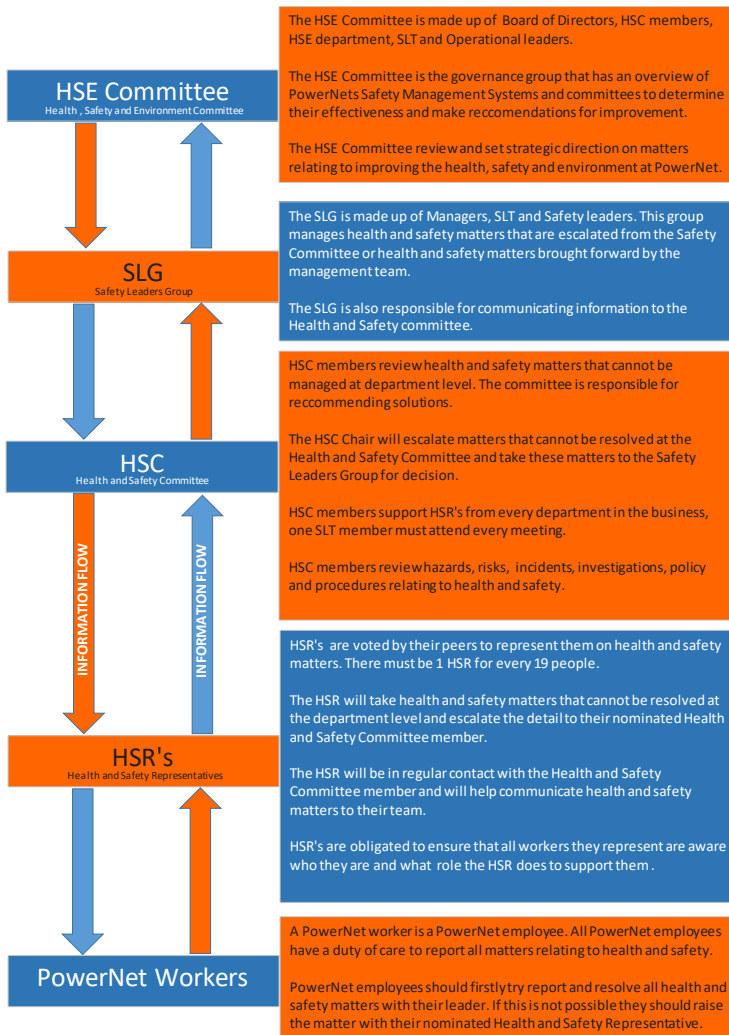
EV chargers to be installed along the Southern Scenic Route.

ACROSS *the* LINES

A new look PowerNet Health and Safety Committee



HSE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES



A new-look PowerNet health and safety committee structure has been designed to increase efficiencies, communication, representation and accountability within the group.

A new chair, Lynley Hall (technical administrator) and deputy chair, Stephen Pike (distribution line mechanic) have been appointed to the lead the committee, which is the result of a restructure following a comprehensive review earlier this year.

PowerNet general manager health, safety, environment and quality general manager Justin Peterson said the review on the previous safety committee format carried out by the HSE team found significant duplication and lack of diversity across the two East and West sub-committees and the third combined committee.

"To ensure the members can reach the best outcomes it needs to run more efficiently by eliminating the cross over and introducing greater representation and expertise from all areas of the business. The review showed that the best way to do this was to have just one committee which would be supported by trained health and safety representatives and allow members the time needed to fulfil their roles," he said.

Another outcome of the review was the need for more trained health and safety representatives (HSR). A short-term goal is to soon have one per 19 people in the company. These HSRs will support their own work groups on health and safety matters and escalate any unresolved issues to the new safety committee.

Lynley and Stephen were appointed their positions this month through an application and interview process and have since started looking at the best ways to build the new committee and options to best achieve success in the future.

Committee members will be nominated and selected by the chair in coming weeks with their first job to run a voting process to determine the new HSRs.



Lynley Hall



Stephen Pike

ACROSS *the* LINES

Smart Energy Home – Winter update

PowerNet's Smart Energy Home project is at its half way mark and already providing some great insight into smart energy living in the Southland region.

PowerNet electrical engineer Dyson Gentle is leading the year long project, which tracks the energy uses and trends of a family, Cam and Chloe Waru and their young daughter Maci, living in a purpose-made smart energy home in Invercargill.

"We are now seeing the full impact of winter and are learning what simple changes in the technology and behaviour are useful to extract the most value from our smart energy home," Dyson said.



Chloe Waru.

As part of planning for winter, the house battery operation mode was changed from charging on excess solar generation in the day (which would otherwise be exported to the grid) to charging over night when the cost of electricity is lower. This set-up allows the battery to provide power supply during the day when electricity is most expensive.

"We have found solar generation rarely gets above the household load at this time of year. So, while solar generation is effectively free once installed, it makes sense to charge the battery from effectively limitless cheap night rate power from the grid rather than hoping for a sunny day mid-winter," he said.

While this set-up is providing the most cost-effective results for now, new home energy management software is being developed to predict the weather forecast and decide day by day on the most efficient option.

So, how's the Waru family finding the experience so far? We caught up with Cam to talk about winter, bills and energy saving hints!

It's winter in Southland, how has it been living in the smart energy home? *Winter time has certainly been pretty interesting and challenging in terms of keeping heat in the house. Maci and I tend to be home more during the days in winter. Our main source of heating is two heat pumps, which we have set on timers to try and be most efficient.*

How are your power bills looking? *They are relatively 'normal' for us for winter time prices, however, the big difference is that we are now running more appliances for the same cost - it's awesome!*

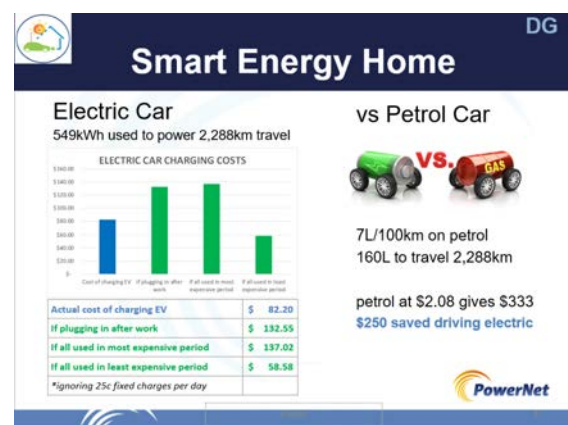
What do you think is contributing most to overall monthly savings? *Definitely the electric vehicle! The fact that we can pay about \$8-\$10 to charge the car rather than spending \$20-\$30 a week on gas really adds up, it has saved us so much already!*

Does it take some adjusting getting use to the EV? *Saving money is great and we love zipping around town in it. I have noticed over winter that the heater uses a lot of power, so if I get up early for the gym and it's a frosty morning, getting the car warm for the trip drains the battery quite significantly. Nothing a puffer jacket and a beanie can't fix!*

What has surprised you the most about this experience? *We can use all the appliances we have and still save money every month, even during winter, Solar also gives us some savings but doesn't generate a lot in winter.*

Left: How does 75 percent off sound? Data from the Smart Energy Home shows The Waru family have made great savings running an electric vehicle charged overnight.

Follow the Waru's year in the Smart Energy Home on Instagram www.instagram.com/PowerNetNZ or Facebook - www.facebook.com/PowerNetNZ



ACROSS *the* LINES

Mataura Valley Milk plant switched on



The full 4MVA power supply is now available to the Mataura Valley Milk nutritional dairy plant at McNab near Gore.

Over the past year PowerNet staff and contractors have been installing the electrical infrastructure to supply the plant in what is a \$6.5 million project.

The plant's electrical load is supplied from the South Gore substation and approximately 16km of underground cabling has been laid to the McNab site. This cable is rated at 33kV but will initially be energised at 11kV.

"There are two cables that run in parallel from the South Gore substation through residential Gore, beneath State Highway One, the railway line, the Mataura River, the Waikaka Stream, and under the railway line again to reach the plant," says PowerNet project manager Nathan Donnelly. "Each cable is capable of supplying full plant load."

Work on the site's 11kV ring distribution network which PowerNet owns and operates, is also finished. The plant is currently being commissioned and milk is now being processed as part of the start-up, with the electrical load increasing as more equipment comes on line.

A new zone substation is also being constructed for this project, which will be located next to the plant at McNab. The substation building is currently having 11kV switchgear installed in Invercargill, and will be transported to site when complete.

Should load growth or plant expansion occur, the supply cables will be energised at 33kV, and two 33/11kV transformers will be installed at the substation.

Nathan said this has been a challenging project and a great deal of work has been carried out to meet the timeline.

Although the plant can operate at full capacity now, full protection, remote monitoring and control will not be available until the substation construction is complete.

It is expected that the zone substation will be operational with independent dual supplies in early 2019. The plant is now opened for processing, with the first tanker of milk arriving from a Southland farm on 21 August.

Welcome to our New Staff



Scott Whitaker
Senior HR Advisor
Racecourse Road



Summer de Thierry
Customer Support
Racecourse Road



Mathew Olsen
Utility Arborist
Balclutha



Tomasi Coriakula
Power Systems Technician
Balclutha



Megan Clow
Receptionist
Racecourse Road

Welcome:

Kayla Dent (Balclutha and Michael Eade (Racecourse Road).

Congratulations:

Graeme Webby on his appointment of fatality prevention project manager, Terry Jones on his role of Balclutha redevelopment manager, Lance Harris as team leader (Invercargill), Travis Bastiaansen depot supervisor (Gore), Nick Faddes distribution team leader, Phil Chittock on his secondment as PowerNet project manager (Frankton) and Phil Johnson as health, safety and environment manager.

Farewell:

Chris Walker (Balclutha), Tracy South (Racecourse Road), Graham Patterson (Palmerston), Sohail Bhatti (Racecourse Road), Rajinda Seraratne (Balclutha) Marlene Clifford (Racecourse Road) Chris Way (Frankton) Liam Mahon (Onslow depot) and Godfrey Chinembiri (Onslow depot).

Work Anniversaries:

Lynley Hall and Warren Dobson (20 years), Fraser Morrison, Deon Bridger and Phil Johnson (10 years) work anniversaries with PowerNet.

Work achievements:

Ione Pau, Brandon Hunt, Samantha Maurangi, Jackson Unahi and Jed Anderson for gaining the Level 4 National Certificate in Electricity Supply, Samantha Maurangi on becoming a finalist in the Distribution Trainee of the Year category in the 2018 Annual Connection Excellence Awards.

Baby congratulations:

Alex Herring and partner Marley Anderson on the birth of their daughter Meesha, 7lb 9oz, born 3 July. Deahan Maloney and partner Danielle Graves on the birth of their son Nahla, 8lb 3oz, born 7 August. Zariaha Carman on the birth of her daughter on 9 August weighing 5lb 8oz. Jack Senior and partner Catlin Sexton on the birth of their daughter Harper, weighing 7lb 10oz on 12 August.

Happy retirement Marlene!

After 22 years as PowerNet's receptionist Marlene Clifford retired in late June. Infrastructure and administration manager Claire Wallis said, "Marlene has been such a committed employee and face of PowerNet who will be greatly missed by customers and colleagues alike."

The PowerNet Racecourse Road ladies gave Marlene a farewell which she will never forget, sharing a Thai meal before kicking-off into an evening of fun games. Thanks to Jeanette Cross (Waric's wife) for creating the amazing telephone cake which all staff who attended Marlene's official farewell presentation enjoyed.

