

The importance of 'doing what we do well'



Jason Franklin

An ambitious works programme is just one of several key focuses being managed by PowerNet this year as part of the Company's overall business plan.

Chief Executive Jason Franklin said progress was continuously being reviewed to ensure execution of the business plan remained 'on track'.

"It's essential to make sure your business plan isn't gathering dust. It needs to be treated as a live document that is constantly being reviewed," he said.

"It's important we deliver what we've committed to for the network owners and our focus is on our business plan and ensuring we are working on it as a team."

"One of the four key strategies is 'do what we do well' so it's about managing the networks well and not only dealing with any issues as they arise, but also anticipating what might emerge."

Along with monthly reporting, key performance indicators have been introduced so progress can be assessed at a glance with new visual systems in place.

"Each quarter the leadership team undertakes a very detailed review of how we are progressing, especially across the 18 key actions of our business plan," Jason said.

"We've also aligned our individual performance measures to the business plan so everyone has Key Accountabilities they need to deliver on as part of the overall performance."

"It also helps the wider team see that what they are contributing has an impact on the overall business plan and they understand what we are trying to achieve as a company."

Substantial projects were now underway across the networks, including Electricity Invercargill Limited's new Spey Street substation, The Power Company's Mossburn to Athol 66kV line and OtagoNet's development of substations at Milburn, Greenfield and various line replacements.

"We've got a big year with the works programme and it's keeping both us and our contracting companies busy," Jason said.

"Together with the routine maintenance, there are significant projects happening in OtagoNet, The Power Company and Electricity Invercargill Limited which we are focusing on."

A commitment to efficient communication has led to the introduction of quarterly team briefings for all staff.

"We get all team members together on a quarterly basis to review the year-to-date but also look ahead to the remainder of the year and beyond," Jason said.

"It's also an opportunity to talk about issues across the business, whether that's looking at new systems or other general electricity industry developments so the team are aware of those wider issues."

The latest quarterly team brief was held on 2nd August.

"All staff need to have a good understanding of the business priorities because then they've got the context and can understand the 'why' of what we are trying to do and what we're trying to achieve," Jason said.

"It helps people understand where they sit in the business and the valuable role they play in its overall success."

Budgets set for works programme

Several substantial projects feature in budgets approved for the network owners annual works programmes.

General Manager of Network Operations, Gary Pritchard said the budgets set provided for a strong balance between maintenance and future proofing the networks' load capacity.

"We have to recognise what our current resource capabilities are and what our future resource capabilities will need to be out in the field," he said.

"The maintenance budgets are slightly up because of the increased data capture and inspection requirements, while the project work is similar to previous years."

Projects for Electricity Invercargill Limited include the relocation of the Doon Street substation to Spey Street with the laying of 33kV cable required from Findlay Road to the new site.

"It's a project being undertaken specifically to cater for load growth," Gary said.

The Power Company's maintenance budget of \$13.3 million is further reinforced by a planned \$9 million works programme.

Switchboards will be replaced at the South Gore and Underwood substations, while Athol and Hedgehope will have new substations.

The transformer at Kennington will be completed and major overhead line construction will take place from Winton to Centre Bush and Mossburn to Athol.

The power of wind

The recent opening of a small wind farm near Milton coincided with a global celebration. PowerNet chief executive Jason Franklin, business development manager Aaron Sinclair and OtagoNet network manager Terry Jones attended the official opening of Pioneer Generation's Mt Stuart Wind Farm, which was held on World Wind Generation Day.

Embedded in the OtagoNet network, the project cost \$17 million and it was commissioned late last year.

Two aspects of the project in particular impressed Jason – community engagement and the overall project management.

"The wind generation project had excellent support from the local community and I believe this was largely due to the way in which Pioneer engaged with the community and made them part of the project," he said.

"The local primary school (Waitahuna) was very involved. The kids visited the project site a couple of times and the school incorporated renewable generation into their learning."

"Community engagement and project management are two aspects very relevant for PowerNet. The importance of engaging with local stakeholders, especially the community, cannot be underestimated. Secondly, delivering projects within timeframes and budget gives the management the 'right to grow' from the board and owners."



Mt Stuart Wind Farm



Waitahuna school pupils showing the winning painting

Doon Street switched on

The new Doon Street 36MVA 33/11kV transformer was energised on 15th June and put on load at the substation four days later.

"The installation and commissioning went very smoothly and was completed in time for the cold snap we experienced shortly after," PowerNet project engineer team leader Mark Zwies said.

"It is a significant milestone and I would like to thank everyone involved in the project who has helped to achieve it."



Jeff Carmody working on the 33/11kV transformer at Doon Street substation

Flashback: Blair Bernard

A career choice made as a teenager has enabled Blair Bernard to tackle some interesting jobs, including stints in Australia and American Samoa.

"It was the outdoors aspect of being a linesman which appealed to me initially and I guess when you're 18 and can hang off ladders from great heights, there's a bit of the thrill factor there as well," he said.

Nearly three decades later, Blair is still enjoying his involvement in the power industry despite 'being off the tools' since 2005 when he joined the Otago Power Services team in Gore as an estimator.

He ventured south to Power Services in 2007 before rejoining the PowerNet ranks for the third time in 2009. He initially worked for the company as a line team member and returned in 1995 as a distribution engineer (as pictured in a newsletter snippet from 1995) before leaving to take up a two-year contract in Townsville, Australia.

Now team leader of commercial connections, Blair oversees new connections over 100kVA, providing an important link between customers and contractors on major developments such as Stadium Southland and the WHK building.

"It gets a bit hectic but I definitely enjoy it," he said. "It's satisfying to know you played a small role in the creation of community assets like the Stadium Southland rebuild."

Away from the office, Blair is an avid sports fan. He's been a member of PowerNet's Harrex Corporate Pursuit cycling team for the past four years, relishes any chance to hit the mountain bike tracks and shares his sporting knowledge through coaching with the Old Boys' Football Club.

He can also be found on the sideline cheering on the sporting endeavours of his three children. Eldest son Jack, 17, was a member of the James Hargest College First 15 in the Highlanders' school rugby competition this year, while Tom, 10, is a Southland football representative. Daughter Samantha, 12, competes in both football and jazz.



Blair Bernard

It's a Daly adventure

The life of PowerNet's Lyn Daly is a hectic one, combining the challenges of her role as business services manager with intensive studies for a Master in Business Administration (MBA).

So, it comes as no surprise to hear Lyn's recent excursion to the other side of the world was a whirlwind trip devoid of sightseeing.

Lyn joined her colleagues from the Massey University MBA programme and jetted off to Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands in June.

"The objective of the trip was to look at global strategies," Lyn said. "We investigated the business models of a number of different businesses – all of which are successful in their own right in Europe."

"We also looked at a lot of centres in Europe specifically established to develop networks between university researchers and businesses to develop new innovations."

With three graded presentations to complete during the two-week trip, the 24 students involved snatched around four and a half hours sleep on average a night.

Perhaps the best reflection of the trip's intensity was Lyn's highlight: "Getting home."



Lyn Daly

Arborist Antics

Utility Arborist Group formed

A concept first mooted over 15 years ago has now reached fruition with the formation of a New Zealand Utility Arborist Group (UAG) thanks, in part, to the efforts of Otago Power Services arborist and compliance manager, Mark Way.

Vegetation management is a significant activity that impacts electricity network companies. OtagoNet spends about \$820,000 annually on vegetation management to ensure that trees are kept well clear of electricity lines in the interests of public safety and electricity reliability. OtagoNet contracts Otago Power Services to complete its vegetation management activities.

Mark and a fellow colleague Brad Ryan, vegetation management supervisor at WEL Networks, had discussions recently with the US Utility Arborist Association about the possibility of forming a New Zealand equivalent to provide a forum for all electricity industry associated activity related to arboriculture.

The New Zealand UAG was formed as a sub-committee of NZ Arbor earlier this year. "The opportunity to network with other like-minded souls in the interests of expanding knowledge, improving processes, increasing safety and all the other good stuff that goes with being part of a professional group is what we are hoping to achieve with the introduction of this new group," Mark said.

Approved vegetation contractor

Otago Power Services' Palmerston arborist crew is the latest to gain Approved Contractor accreditation from the New Zealand Arboricultural Association.

The crew's work practices as well as systems and processes, underwent close scrutiny by external auditors appointed by NZ Arbor. It's also taken possession of a brand new Elevated Work Platform truck – the pride and joy 'tool of trade'.

They have followed in the footsteps of the Balclutha arborist crew which gained accreditation two years ago.

National Certificate

All of Otago Power Services arborists are in the final stages of completing the Level 4 National Certificate in Vegetation Control. Started in 2006, the course has taken some interesting twists and turns with changes to the original qualification midway through the process.

Mark Way said progress to date could be largely credited to the diligence of the ESITO customer services manager for following up on changes and helping to find ways forward for the staff involved.

"One of the biggest challenges has been the Traffic Management unit standard, which requires significant evidence to be provided of your traffic management skills in action," he said.



Mark Way

Government funding extension for SWHT

The Government's decision to extend funding for the national Warm Up New Zealand scheme will result in healthier houses throughout the province.

Greg Buzzard, PowerNet's CFO who administers the Southland Warm Homes Trust (SWHT) said "the Government's funding extension, despite delivering a zero budget in 2012, was a reflection of the high regard the Warm Up New Zealand scheme, which is delivered by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), was held in."

"The EECA team has been hugely impressive in terms of how they have run it and the Government's decision reinforces that," Greg said.

"On a local level, it has exceeded expectations and the SWHT trustees are very happy with how it's progressed."

Established by the Southland Power Trust and Electricity Invercargill, the SWHT also receives vital funding from the Community Trust of Southland, the Invercargill Licensing Trust, the ILT Foundation and local councils.

Service provider Awarua Synergy has a 22-strong team working alongside the SWHT in conjunction with EECA to deliver subsidised energy efficient solutions in Southland.

"Awarua Synergy has one of the better follow-up quality audit performance ratings issued by EECA so Southlanders can be assured they are receiving excellent service," Greg said.

"What we are tending to find now is there are more homes being refitted in rural Southland than Invercargill so the rural community are recognising the benefits. There are a good number of landlords also getting involved with the scheme."

Those opting to take advantage of the scheme currently had a waiting timeframe of just five weeks.

Research undertaken by the Otago University School of Medicine provided undeniable evidence regarding the benefits of insulation or heating refits, including improved quality of life for older residents suffering arthritis or young people with asthma.

Southlanders can book a free assessment of their home by contacting the SWHT on 0800 92 76 76.

Trio earns live line qualification

Power Services has added another trio of live line mechanics to its ranks.

Shane Lawson of Invercargill, Lance Harris of Winton and Joseph Reti of Lumsden, recently completed the intensive seven-week training course to earn their Certificate of Compliance.

Power Services' Phil Johnson said the course comprised three weeks of high voltage live line hot stick training, followed by four weeks of glove and barrier training – all on lines of around 33,000 volts.

"You definitely need to have an appreciation for the fact you are working with live lines but when it comes to learning, there is nothing better than actually getting out and doing the job," he said.

All three began their line mechanic careers with Power Services and, after completing two years in the trade, successfully applied to advance their qualifications to live line.

"There is a selection process as not everyone is cut out for live line work. People need to have the right attributes, especially being able to work in a team environment," Phil said. "It's certainly a step up from general line mechanic work and I would think most line mechanics aspire to do live line. But then it's not everyone's cup of tea."

The company undertook live line work on the network at least once a week. "With the increase in industries like dairying, we can't have shut downs all the time so maintenance work needs to be done live line," Phil said.



Left to right; Shane Lawson, Joseph Reti and Lance Harris replacing an 11kV pole on the training line



Shane Lawson



Lance Harris



Joseph Reti

New Faces at PowerNet



Trevor Stewart

Trevor has returned to the city where he was born, taking up the position of System Controller in Invercargill.

Trevor's working career began back in 1974 with Southland Electric Power Supply (SEPS) in Invercargill. In 1977 Trevor moved to Otematata joining the Waitaki Electric Power Board for a two year stint. Being a true Southlander and missing home, Trevor returned taking up a position with SEPS in Winton. Three years later and wanting new challenges Trevor and the family moved to Ranfurly with the Otago Electric Power Board taking on the role of line overseer. After experiencing three Ranfurly winters it was time for a move and in 1985 the Stewart family relocated to Queenstown where Trevor worked at Otago Central Electric Power Board as line overseer. During this time his responsibilities included management of the line staff, carrying out line design and costing, system operator and also looking after the Frankton substation for Transpower. This position also included travelling to both Alexandra and Cromwell where he managed their control rooms.

Trevor has a daughter Tamie and son Timothy. Trevor's interests include curling, motor cycling and spending time at his crib in Kaka Point with his two grandchildren.



Bevan Cooper

Bevan is the newest member of the electrical engineering team. He holds a degree in Power Electrical Engineering, a Masters in Engineering Management and Diplomas in Aerospace Mechanical and Avionics Engineering. He is a Member of IPENZ, a Chartered Professional Engineer and an International Professional Engineer.

Bevan hails from Taranaki and he moved to Canterbury to start university. After a career as an engineering officer with the Air Force, with postings to Blenheim, Auckland, Melbourne and Ohakea near Palmerston North, Bevan moved to Invercargill to settle down and raise a family. He did his share of the toddler years, with three years as a stay-at-home dad, then worked with New Zealand Aluminium Smelters for a year and a half. On completion of his contract with the smelter he moved to PowerNet and returned to his original professional field in power electrical engineering.

Bevan enjoys spending his spare time with his children, and is looking forward to taking them out to explore the many trails and tramps in the region as they get older. He is a beginner golfer and sometimes coaches in the local childrens soccer league. He is also resuming his old interest in cryptic crosswords, which explains why he so often looks befuddled in the lunch room.



Ron Faulkner

Ron joined the team as a network connections engineer back in May.

After completing an apprenticeship as an electrical fitter with Southland Electric Power Supply (SEPS), Ron left NZ for the big OE with wife Penny. Returning three years later, Ron spent the next 17 years working in the electrical industry, eventually becoming the manager of Nind Electrical Services in Invercargill. Actually Neville Kerslake's boss – but Neville does not hold it against him. Ron sees joining PowerNet as a network connections engineer as a return, as many faces from SEPS still seem to be around.

Ron and Penny are kept busy with their three children Olivia (16) Thomas (14) and Sean (11) and are often found camping in one of their favourite spots at Lake Mavora.



Rachel Kincaid

Rachel grew up in Drummond on the family sheep farm and attended Drummond Primary School then Central Southland College. After leaving school she attended Otago University, graduating with a double degree in finance and economics. After University life, Rachel began casual work at the BNZ in both Te Anau and Invercargill branches. In Rachel's spare time she enjoys baking and playing social netball with her friends in Winton.

The stork has arrived

Congratulations to Kate Barrie on the safe arrival of Evelyn Veda Barrie on 22 May, weighing a healthy 7lbs 13oz.

Assessing performance

A new performance management system has been introduced at PowerNet.

HR manager Janet Ellis said 6-monthly and 12-monthly reviews would be conducted with staff under the new initiative.

"It's exciting because it's an equitable and transparent system. We are sitting down with staff now and setting Key Accountabilities," she said.

"The performance management system looks at what we need to achieve and how we go about achieving it."

Annual report complete

Annual reports are a necessity of business, but there's no excuse to be lacking in the design stakes.

PowerNet enlists the talents of Allan Derrick Design to ensure its annual report is not only informative, but visually appealing to flick through.

The annual report design includes creative images courtesy of Envious Photography's James Jubb.

With the completion of this year's annual report, business services manager Lyn Daly said "It reflects PowerNet's commitment to social responsibility and also highlights a range of accomplishments and initiatives achieved by our staff and contractors during the past financial year."

"We find PowerNet exciting and innovative to work with and they always have been," Allan said.

"The ideal client is one who allows us to come up with the more off-the-wall alternatives."

"We like to have our clients on board with our ideas otherwise it's very hard to design and produce concepts if you're not all buying into the same vision."

Allan's experience in the graphic design industry spans decades.

"I just had a bent for it and I was very fortunate to be in the right place at the right time," he said.

"Those were the days when it was pretty rugged – if you were good you were in, if you weren't you were out."

With both national and international awards to his credit, it's not hard to pick which side Allan was on.

He's designed stamps for NZ Post and posters for the 1974 Commonwealth Games during his extensive career; and now provides a vast array of creative services for clients from his Invercargill studio.



Allan Derrick and Haylee Officer

Harrex Corporate challenge

The PowerNet 'Shock to the System' cycling team of Blair Bernard, Jason Franklin, Sally Mcleod, Scott Murch, Shirley Whitaker and Steven Wallace, coached by Tony Corkill and Alaister Marshall, were one of the 34 teams entered in the Harrex Group Corporate Pursuit at Stadium Southland Velodrome in July. This event is in its 7th year and is the largest corporate cycling participation event of its kind in the world, with over 200 riders involved. The team ended up having five races, winning two and losing three, but ended the event on a positive note with a personal best time of 1:26 in its final race. For the record, the team beat ILT Heineken #2, lost to Harrex Group, lost to McIntyre Dick and Partners, beat McIntyre Dick and Partners and then lost to HW Richardson Group in the Division 2 Plate semi-final.



The PowerNet 'Shock to the System' cycling team

Ch-ch-changes

Aaron Sinclair has embraced a new challenge, taking on the role as PowerNet's new commercial manager.

Tasked with identifying and securing opportunities for the networks to grow their business, Aaron enjoys the variety of the additional duties which involve anything from smart metering to the fibre optic development.

"My main focus is on building relationships and ensuring our name is out there when people are considering various developments and ensuring that we have an opportunity to put a case together for their project," he said.

"Forming the right relationships is an integral part of successful business."

Commercial analyst Drew Curtis has taken responsibility for some of Aaron's previous work and Rachel Kincaid has joined the team.

The Business Services Team has expanded with Mary-Anne Smith joining the ranks in June as infrastructure administrator.

Mary-Anne will be responsible for the building maintenance programme across the group of companies as well as leases (buildings and vehicles), insurance valuations, building security and compliance.

Home sweet home for Power Services

Power Services Limited now has all of their Invercargill staff under the same roof.

The PowerNet contractor moved into new premises at 27 Onslow Street at the end of June, adjacent to the previous site occupied by its line mechanics.

Administration manager Claire Wallis said office staff and technicians, who have been based at Racecourse Road since 2008, were enjoying the new environment.

"The biggest benefit of being here is just to have everyone as one group, and I think the guys at the depot needed a woman's touch around the place," she said.

Previously owned by McNeill Drilling, the building has been revamped to include new tearoom and training rooms, a locker room and bathroom facilities.



Stella O'Connor

Recent Sponsorships

National Grey Power AGM

PowerNet provided sponsorship to the National Grey Power AGM held in Invercargill back in May. PowerNet's chief engineer, Roger Paterson, attended the event and spoke to the Grey Power members about PowerNet's role, safety around electricity and the importance of quality, price and efficiency.

Outdoor Stadium Trust

With the Rugby ITM Cup now underway many people will be watching the newly erected scoreboard. PowerNet secured the sponsorship of the scoreboard for the 2012 season. This will be a great branding exercise for PowerNet and we hope to continue this in the years to come.



Vital Signs Team erecting the PowerNet signage at Southland's Rugby Park

Red Frog Sponsorship

PowerNet recently connected with the community through sponsorship of the Red Frogs. The Red Frogs are a support network for university students and school-leavers run by volunteers. In June the Red Frogs cooked up a sausage sizzle for SIT students during a Friday lunch break. The sausages were supplied by PowerNet and business services co-ordinator, Kathryn McCoy, attended the event.



Kathryn McCoy

News on our Tour Boys - from Southland to Melbourne, London, Texas, Belgium, France ...

PowerNet's major sponsorship, the Tour of Southland, runs from 28 October – 3 November 2012. PowerNet also enters a team of cyclists in the race. Last year our team of young riders worked together to win the PowerNet Tour.

It has been nearly a year since our team thrust the prestigious Tour of Southland trophy aloft. From the London Olympics to the demanding European circuit, the riders have been racking up some impressive achievements.

Even the PowerNet mechanic Ollie Harnett from Cycle Surgery has been showcasing his skills on the international stage.

The talented 19-year-old earned a spot as second mechanic on the New Zealand team competing at the UCI World Junior Championships in Invercargill last month.

"It was a great experience," Ollie said and working with the New Zealand team so that they could perform at their best was awesome.

"The pressure was really on during race night to get the gears right and make sure everything was precise."

Working after school at Cycle Surgery fuelled his passion, particularly working alongside Bike NZ mechanic Chris O'Connor.

"He inspired me by what he was doing and over the years he has shown me a lot about the trade," Ollie said.

Following in Chris' footsteps to the Olympic arena would be "a dream come true".

"It will take time to reach that level and there's a lot of things that the guys at Cycle Surgery keep me focused on in order to achieve that."

His next assignment will be to keep the wheels of the PowerNet team spinning during this year's Tour.

"I loved it last year ... you just learn so much during events like that."

As for the rest of the troops, they've been clocking up the air miles.

Tom Scully has been riding for the Garmin-First Solar U23 development team and has racked up some impressive results in Europe to earn a spot as a stagiaire for Garmin-Sharp. The "Scud" has also been selected in the NZ road race team to compete at the U23 World Champs.

Selection in the New Zealand team to compete at the London Olympics was understandably a career highlight for Shane Archbold who endured an intense build-up – both mentally and physically – before doing the silver fern proud in the omnium event.

Alex Frame (aka A Frame) has been racing in Europe most of the year and finished a credible fourth in the scratch race at the 2012 World Track Championships in Melbourne.

Cam Karwowski has been competing strongly in Belgium and has produced some excellent results in some gruelling races. He joined forces with Myron Simpson to earn bronze in the team pursuit at the UCI World Cup in Beijing.

For Myron, a second place finish in the Bevel Kermesse in Belgium and a top 10 result in the Pais de Savoie in France have been among this year's highlights.

Tour winner Josh Atkins has continued to perform solidly for the Bontrager-Livestrong U23 development team based in Texas and was also selected in the NZ team alongside Tom for the U23 World Champs road race.



Ollie Harnett

PowerNets "Fountain of Youth"

In a recent office tidy-up we came across a few staff photo's taken back in 2002. You must agree that our staff haven't changed a bit.

