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ESCoSA report confirms appropriate December storm response by SA Power Networks

SA Power Networks welcomes the report of the Essential Services Commission of South Australia into SA Power Networks' response to the 27-29 December 2016 storm, which impacted 183,000 customers.

"We are pleased the Commission has acknowledged the unprecedented nature of the storm; the high number of outages caused; that we restored power as soon as practicable; and that it has confirmed our approach to crew resourcing," said Paul Roberts, Manager Stakeholder Relations.

"This was the worst storm we have experienced in terms of damage to the electricity distribution network; the number of customers affected; the duration of outages; and the impact in terms of minutes without supply for customers.

"In terms of minutes without supply, we had more than a whole year's impact of outages in just this one storm," Mr Roberts said.

In summary, the Commission report makes the following key points:

- The extent of damage from the storm was unprecedented.
- The long average restoration times reflected the severity of the storm.
- Damage to the network led to an exceptionally high number of outages.
- SA Power Networks restored supply as soon as practicable given the level of damage to the network and the weather conditions, which hampered restoration.
- The cost of building a storm-resistant network outweighs the benefits.
- SA Power Networks' approach to crew resourcing is appropriate.
- There is no justification for increasing resources to respond specifically to these type of events as the resources would otherwise be idle other times during the year.

"SA Power Networks has acknowledged that communication to customers, particularly through direct SMS, could have been better and we are taking a number of steps to improve how we communicate during these kind of major events," Mr Roberts said.

"This includes work underway to enhance our capability to directly SMS customers with accurate outage information.

"We currently have mobile phone contact details for nearly 400,000 customers. As we are reliant on retailers to provide contact information for their customers, we recommend customers ensure their retailer has up to date mobile contact details at all times."

Copies of the ESCoSA report are available [here](#)

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