

Adelaide Central Business District (CBD) Electricity Supply Reliability



What's been happening

During the last 15 years the reliability performance of the electricity supply in the Adelaide CBD has significantly improved with the average minutes without power for Adelaide CBD customers reducing from 35 minutes to 15 minutes. See figure 1.

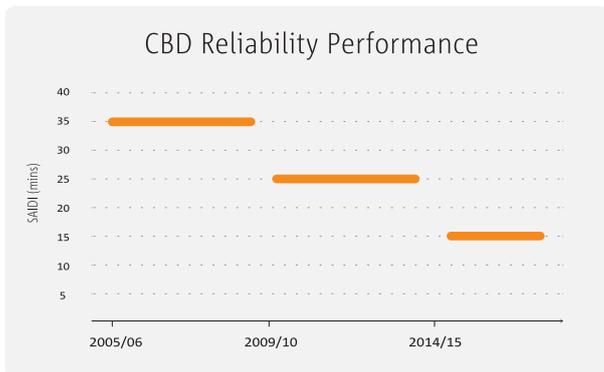


Figure 1

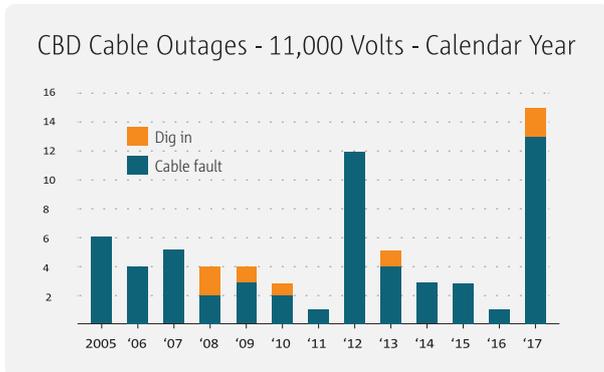


Figure 2

Actions being taken by SA Power Networks

SA Power Networks acknowledges that the recent poor reliability experienced by some customers in the CBD and those visiting the city is unacceptable and we are actively addressing the issue through a dedicated task force which is implementing a multi-point action plan, including:

- a temporary depot has been established within the CBD with increased crews and equipment being permanently based in the CBD so they are readily available to locate faults and restore power as soon as possible, noting that with underground cables it can take some time to locate faults;
- exploring options to enable the remote monitoring of the CBD electricity network as currently fault finding is undertaken by manual inspection;
- investigating with the assistance of international experts whether the most recent experience is an indicator of a likely trend in failure rates of these older cables. This will determine the extent and rate at which we should replace these cables; and
- enhanced procedures have been implemented to improve customer and stakeholder communications during CBD outages.

We will provide periodic updates of the progress of our action plan to the Essential Services Commission of South Australia and on our website.

Over the last six months we have seen an unexpected level of failure of our older 11,000-volt underground cables. Several incidents have been caused by third parties disturbing cables. See figure 2. Many of these cables were installed more than 30 years ago and are of lead covered paper insulated construction.

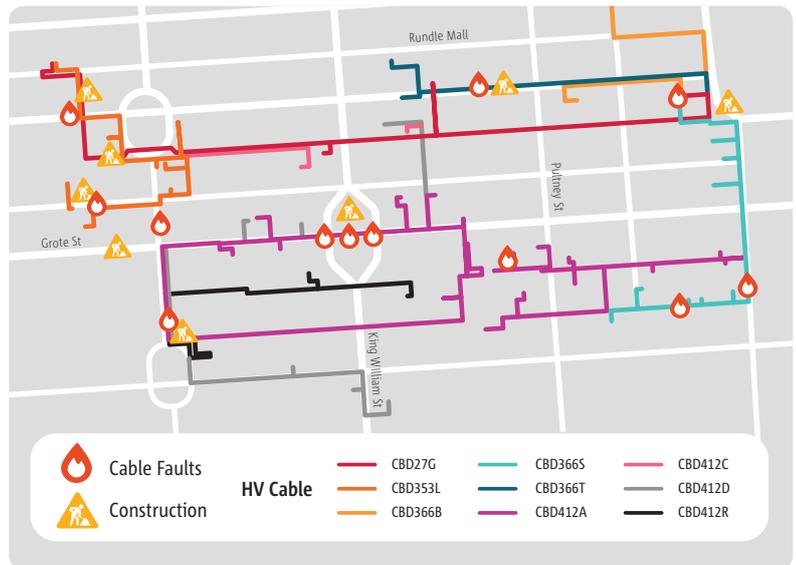


Figure 3

There is no clear pattern of failure with incidents scattered across the CBD. We have observed that most incidents have occurred within a short distance of construction sites and this is being considered as part of an action plan discussed below. See figure 3.