Insulator Pollution

Community Meeting

Cowell, 2 March 2026

SA Power Networks

Acknowledgement of Country

SA Power Networks acknowledges the multiple Traditional Owners of the lands that host the South Australian electricity network and their connections to land, sea, and community.

We would also like to pay our respects to all First Nations peoples past and present, acknowledging their deep connection to Country, Culture and Community.

Connection With Country, 2025 by Kelly Taylor & T'Keyah Ware

SA Power Networks Team

Andrew Bills
CEO SA Power Networks

Mark Vincent
Chief Operating Officer

Jess Morris
Chief Customer & Strategy Officer

Matt Napolitano
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Kym Williams
Network Reliability Operations Manager

Mark Pynn
Head of Asset Investment

Greg Eyers
Operations Manager - Eyre

A word from Sam Telfer MP and Andrew Bills

Sam Telfer MP
State Member for Flinders

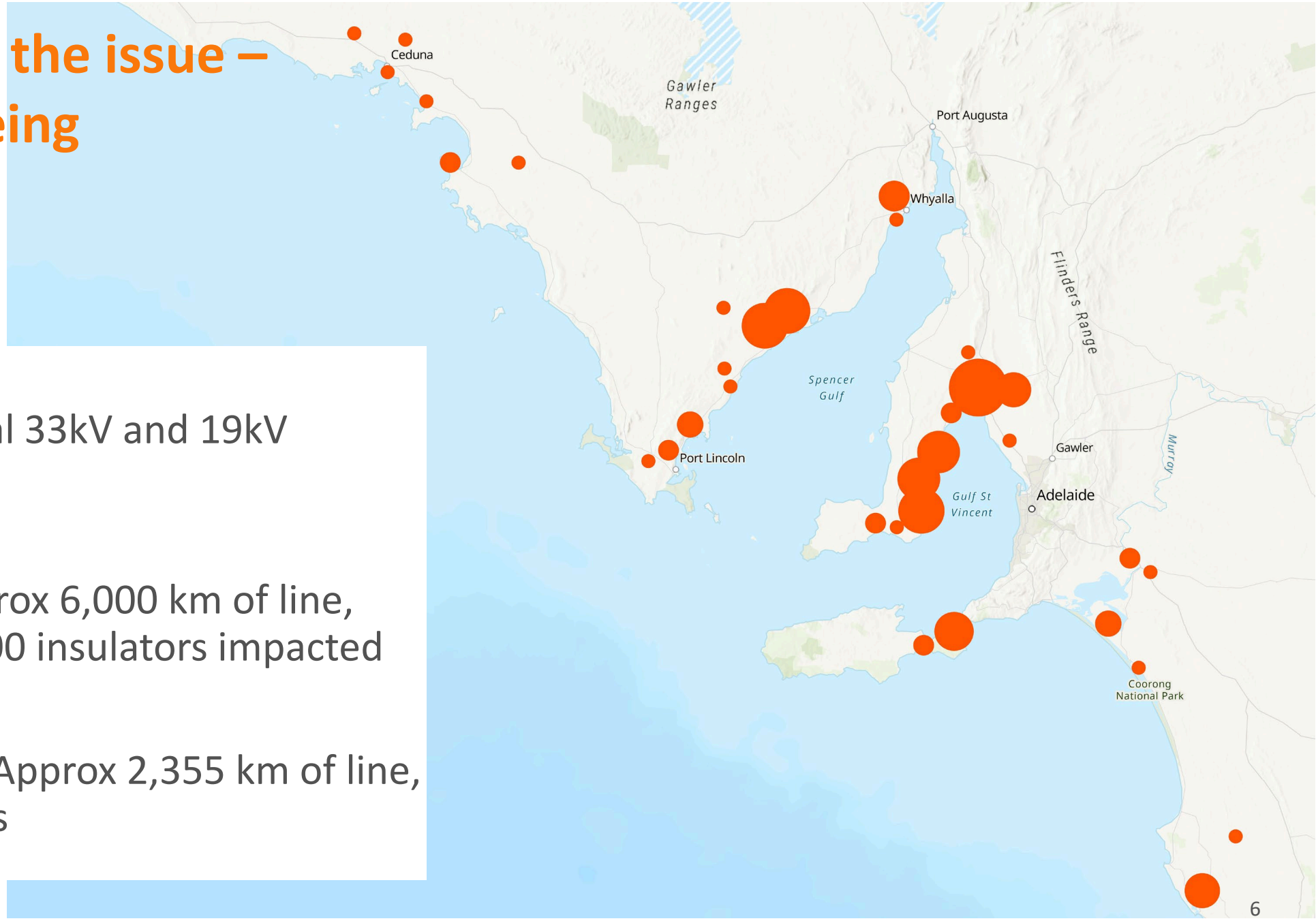
CEO Andrew Bills
SA Power Networks

The issue – what it is

- Insulators secure powerlines while preventing electric current from flowing into the pole and to the ground
- Built up dust, dirt and salt – combined with dew – can create a conductive path (a “flashover”)
- This issue first emerged materially in summer 2024/25, but has re-emerged in 2026 earlier and to a greater extent
- What we believe has changed, based on current understanding:
  - Climatic changes: longer periods without rain and rising sea temperatures
  - Undetected impacts of last year’s pollution event

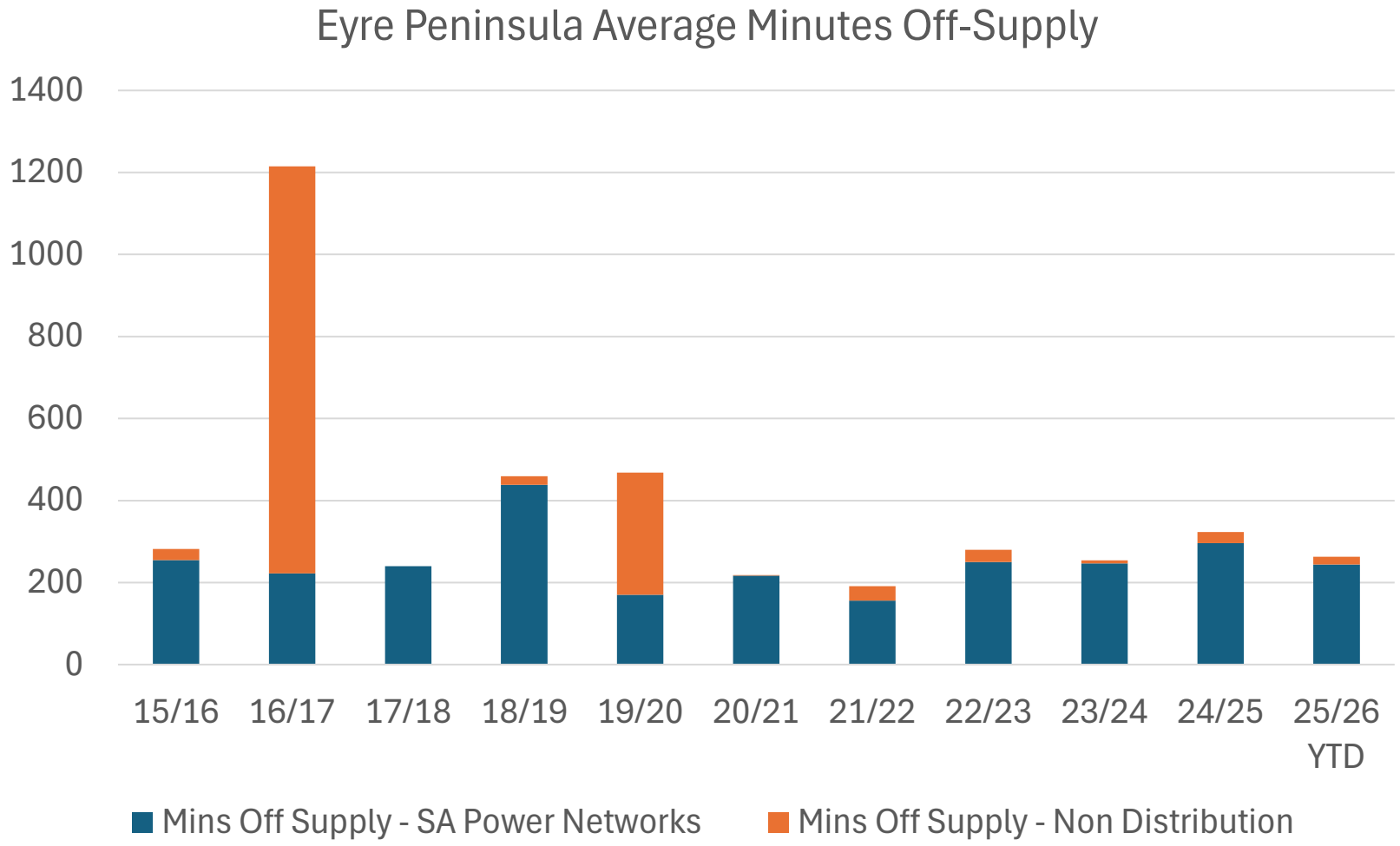
The breadth of the issue – what we're seeing

- Impacting coastal 33kV and 19kV powerlines
- **State-wide:** Approx 6,000 km of line, potentially 52,000 insulators impacted
- **Eyre Peninsula:** Approx 2,355 km of line, 13,600 insulators



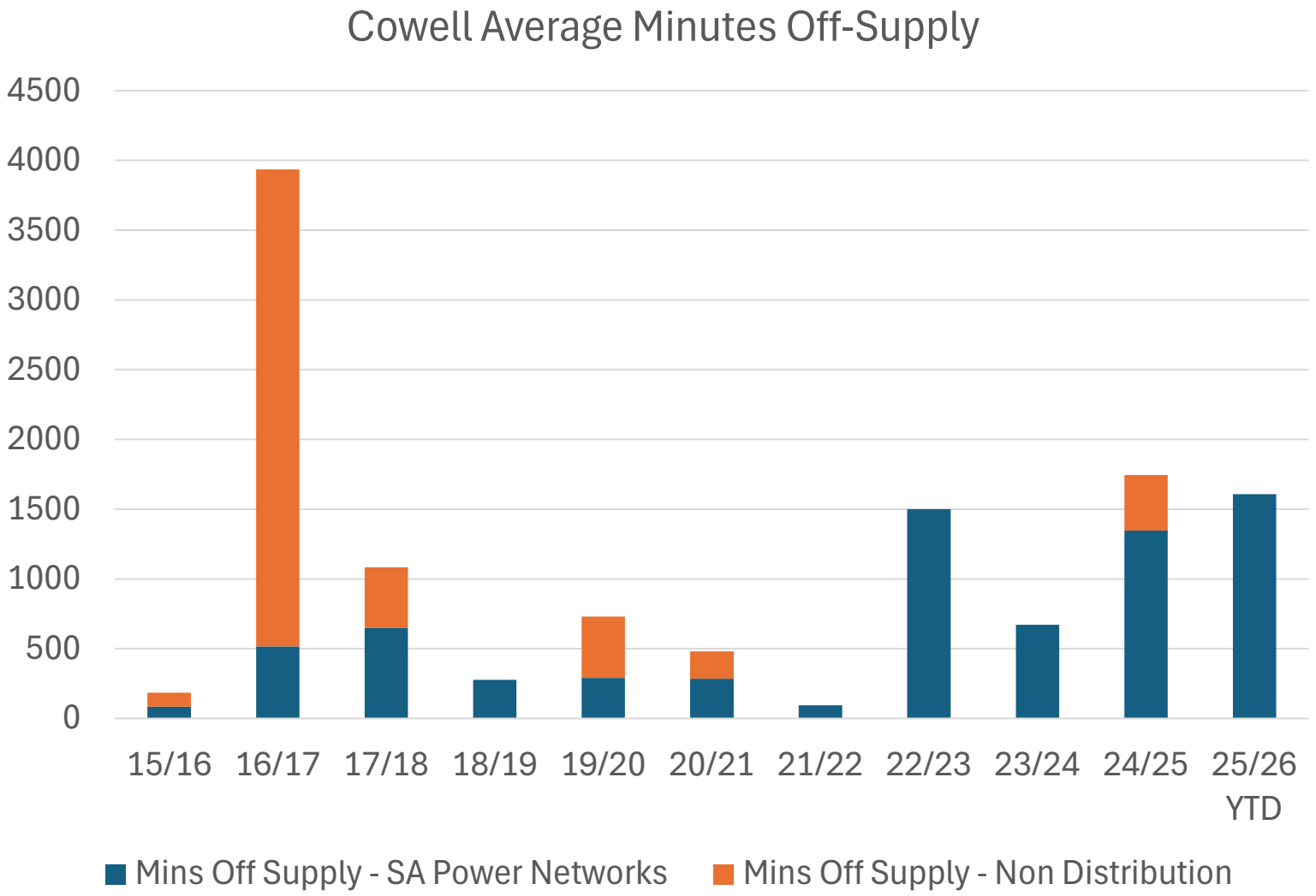
Historical Reliability Performance – Eyre Peninsula

- The Eyre Peninsula network has historically met reliability performance targets
- Over the past decade, supply interruptions have largely resulted from lightning
- Insulator pollution impact limited to coastal communities



However, some communities are more poorly served – Cowell

- The reliability of supply to Cowell is generally below the Eyre Peninsula average
- Cowell has been one of the areas most affected by insulator pollution over the last two summers
- Poor reliability performance due to susceptibility of long, radial network to weather impacts



Getting the power back on when it goes off

IMMEDIATE

- Daily network performance monitoring and weather forecasting
- Additional supply restoration crews available to respond to outages based on forecast weather conditions
- Deploying local mobile generation to provide backup supply for communities experiencing highest impact

Mitigation and Remediation

- Prioritising all local crews, with additional support
- Targeted asset inspections to identify issues
- Insulator washing and targeted replacement of worst condition insulators, requiring planned interruptions
- Alternative washing methods to speed up the process, including the use of helicopters

Mitigation and Remediation

MEDIUM/LONG-TERM

- Silicone coating of insulators (TBC)
  - reduces likelihood of flashover occurring
- Multi-year insulator upgrade program, combined with broader network rebuild to:
  - Upgrade network with more pollution resilient insulators
  - Improve overall reliability performance of the region
- We are also giving consideration to options such as community resilience batteries

Keeping you informed

- We are working to provide regular (fortnightly) updates to impacted, subscribed customers
- We will provide further information on specific operational initiatives, via direct customer communication, social and local media and at www.sapowernetworks.com.au
- We will hold further community meetings across impacted regions, and will provide a summary after those meetings
- Our *Insulator Pollution* web-page is a central source of information on:
    - How we are addressing the issue
    - Planned work
    - Latest news
    - Upcoming community meetings

Insulator Pollution Webpage

Outage Updates

Q & A

Operational activity – a daily report

Line	Name	Custs	Fire Starts	Pollution Outages	Pollution Reclose Incidents Total	Intervention
				Total		
PL34	Terminal - Tod 33kV	3804	5	2	24	Emergency Wash Completed 11/2/26
SD355	Dalrymple - Marion Bay 33kV	3594	4	3	29	Planned Wash Completed 17/02/26,
SD354	Dalrymple – Stansbury 33kV	850	3	9	17	Emergency Wash Completed 9/2/26, Heli Wash Planned Next Week (TBC)
SD401	Tailem Bend – Woods Point 33kV	2,051	3	2	3	Replacement/Wash Completed Sunday 22/02/26
SD344	Hummocks – Kadina East 33kV	257	2	1	8	Wash Suspended due to Forecast Rains
PL33	Uley 33kV	1,523	2	1	13	Emergency Wash Completed 13/2/26
SD531	Cleve - Cowell 33kV	1,187	1	10	67	Emergency Wash Completed 15/2/26
SD352	Ardrossan West – Port Vincent 33kV	929	1	6	13	Wash Completed 23/2/26
SD492	Hatherleigh - Beachport 33kV	3,419	1	5	34	Wash Suspended due to Forecast Rains
SD342	Hummocks - Port Wakefield 33kV	1,391	-	12	44	Wash Completed 21/2/26
SD551	Boothby – Arno Bay 33kV	161	-	10	6	Wash Completed + Insulators Replaced 25/2/26, Heli Wash TBA
SD443	Cape Jervis - Kingscote 33kV (Mainland Side)	4,359	-	6	39	Washing Suspended following Rain. Monitor
SD443	Cape Jervis - Kingscote 33kV (KI Side)	4,359	-	-	-	Emergency Wash Completed 8/2/26. Monitor
SD341	Hummocks – Balaklava 33kV	1,391	-	5	17	Wash Planned (Day) 3/3/26 and 4/3/26 (TBC Pending Rain)
SD353	Port Vincent – Minlaton 33kV	978	-	4	1	Wash Completed 24/2/26, all but 4x poles complete
CM35	Tumby Bay 33kV	3	-	3	12	Spot Wash Completed + replace critical sites 18/2/26
SD343	Hummocks – Ardrossan 33kV	351	-	2	3	Spot Wash Completed 9/2/26
SD562	Whyalla Central – Whyalla Stuart 33kV	5,808	-	1	-	Emergency Wash Completed 11/2/26
SD351	Ardrossan West – Maitland 33kV	1745	-	1	13	Wash Completed Wednesday (Night) 25/02/2026
SD1571	Goolwa – Square Water Hole 66kV	8,961	-	-	4	Monitor
SD541	Port Augusta - Port Augusta West 33kV	6,694	-	-	5	Emergency Wash Completed 13/02/26, 19/2/26
SSD337	Ceduna Substation	-	-	-	-	Wash Completed 15/02/2026
SSD753	Cowell Substation	-	-	-	-	Wash Completed 15/02/2026
SSD779	Ardrossan West Substation	-	-	-	-	Wash Completed Saturday 21/2/26
SSD418	Ardrossan Substations	-	-	-	-	Wash Completed Saturday 21/2/26
SSD757	Arno Bay Substation	-	-	-	-	Wash Completed 31/1/26