

WPD reports on year of service excellence

People living in the Midlands, South Wales and the South West are experiencing the lowest average power cut levels on record, and a smarter electricity network is well on its way to meeting future energy challenges in the regions.

WPD has recently reported back on its performance in the first year of an eight year business plan period, overseen by the industry regulator Ofgem – and the results are great news for consumers.

The average UK domestic customer pays around \$123 (£100) of their annual bill for the distribution of power via their local network of cables, poles and substations. In return, WPD has nearly halved the average length of power cuts (versus 2012 levels), and reduced by a quarter the likelihood of a power cut happening in the first place.

Customers have also given WPD a huge thumbs up – rating them the best electricity network in the UK with average customer satisfaction of 89%.

Over the period 2015-2023 WPD is investing \$8.75 billion (£7.1 billion) to improve the local electricity network. It will deliver 76 core outputs over eight years as agreed and shaped by stakeholders, and is already performing well above target in the vast majority of areas.

Other highlights from the first year of performance include:

- Virtually eliminating failures against the 12 hour supply restoration standard;
- An extensive tree trimming program to mitigate the risk of storms leading to power cuts;
- Improving services for customers who would like a new connection to the network – achieving a successful assessment against Ofgem's Incentive on Connection Engagement;
- Supporting over half a million vulnerable customers to be better prepared for a power cut;
- Helping over 6,500 fuel poor customers to save a total of \$1.7 million (£1.4 million) a year.

At the same time, WPD is rising to the challenge posed by a low carbon future. It is working to reduce the cost of providing enough capacity on the network by developing a number of 'smart' solutions, including 18 major innovation projects. These are already helping to manage the impact of significant growth in low carbon technologies such as domestic solar panels and electric vehicles.

The report on WPD's first year performance (2015/16) can be found on its website www.westernpower.co.uk/Performance. Available in a number of formats, the report can be viewed as a high level snapshot, a summary report or a comprehensive report.

Phil Swift, WPD's Operations Director explained: "We've made good progress towards achieving our RIIO-ED1 Business Plan commitments, beating targets in many cases.

"A 'smart' future brings some exciting challenges for electricity networks and we're already evolving to make sure we play a key role in the UK's low carbon future.

"We would welcome further input from stakeholders on the structure and content of our reporting, and this feedback will be used to shape performance reports in the future."

You can share feedback at one of WPD's stakeholder workshops, which are taking place between January 24 and February 2, or via the feedback form on our website at: www.westernpower.co.uk/Performance