NIF AC Feeders Upgrade

Project management to support all interface issues and ensure client programs and milestones were achieved.

Collaborative working approach with Abergeldie, residents, and the community to achieve project outcomes.

Management of communications and stake holder engagement to build and maintain strong relationships.

Client	Timing	Services provided	Team
Abergeldie Complex Infrastructure (Abergeldie)	February 2021 – August 2024	Community & Stakeholder Engagement	Dave Simpfendorfer Natasha Lumley

The Project

Transport for NSW is making improvements to electrical infrastructure across the network to meet expected power requirements for Sydney's future rail network and new fleet of air-conditioned trains.

The AC Feeders Upgrade project, broadly, upgraded two main 33kV high voltage (HV) feeders. One is from the Sefton Triangle to Bankstown via the rail corridor and the other from Bankstown to Revesby Station largely along public streets, a total of 9 km. The AC Feeder Upgrade Project is part of the Power Supply Upgrade which is designed to meet expected power requirements for Sydney's future rail network and the new fleet of airconditioned trains.

Through the project, 140 poles were replaced to upgrade ageing poles to current standards and 75 km of conductors run. All of this has been driven by the Abergeldie team which expended 125,000 person hours. Upgrading live electrical feeders requires planned outages, coordinated with Ausgrid and Sydney Trains in the light of the availability of personnel from Transport for NSW and Abergeldie – often a complex arrangement. The team has delivered the upgrade works during 70 planned electrical outages.

Our role

Ineco was embedded into the Abergeldie project team to manage the community engagement required as works progressed along the 9km route.

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Ineco's scope

The Ineco team, integrated in the Abergeldie project team, needed to manage the community being affected by a long series of day or overnight disruptions to residents and business along the route as new poles were installed, old poles removed, new higher current high voltage (HV) conductors strung, and the Ausgrid low voltage (LV) electrical assets were transferred onto the new poles.

The Ineco team's engagement of the community along both feeder routes included:

- Regular communication via monthly and specific local notification was the primary communication mechanism. 72 different notifications were distributed to 32,300 letterboxes through the project's life.
- Door knocking, and targeted phone calls, SMS and emails were all carried out to engage with local businesses, churches and schools along the route.
- Addressed property impacts through negotiations with owners and tenants.
- 102 different letters of offer for Ausgrid Life Support customers, for alternative accommodation, and for respite vouchers were distributed to 1400 households to mitigate noise impacts and loss of power. Each acceptance was individually handled, with return phone calls and emails resulting in the successful fulfillment of respite requests.
- While most of the feeder routes are above ground, a short section through Revesby Station Car Park required the upgrade of both conductors and the existing underground conduits. Shutting down a large section of the car park for over 8 weeks required active community engagement – which proved very successful. Despite a mix of apartments and small businesses adjoining, the team received no community complaints regarding the car park work.

Outcomes

Ineco built and managed trust levels between the community and the project team around community expectations during shutdowns including noise, removal of parking, work practices, and social distancing.

Ineco rose to the challenge of managing the community through a long series of power disruptions. Communication and seamless teamwork with Abergeldie were keys to the successful engagement with the affected community. Ineco assisted Abergeldie in overcoming multiple project challenges to deliver a quality outcome. COVID, industrial disruption, and coordination of very diverse stakeholders were all successfully negotiated with Ineco's team of experienced consultants.