

# 15 kilometre fibre optic

THE western Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island is set to benefit from the construction of a new 15-kilometre-long fibre optic cable connection.

The \$7 million cable will improve the management of electricity supply to the region, as well as internet connection and speed to households and businesses.

Following years of stakeholder forums and regional development engagement, SA Power Networks said the decision to install the fibre optic cable, made use of the existing 33,000 volt power undersea cable installed in 2018, that connects Kangaroo Island with Cape Jervis and the southern Fleurieu Peninsula.

The installation will also offer further capacity to telecommunications businesses both on Kangaroo Island and the western Fleurieu.

SA Power Networks Head of Corporate Affairs, Paul Roberts, said installation of the fibre optic cable, which will connect the electricity distributor's network operations centre to Kingscote substation, was underway.

"This will be completed by July 2024," Mr Roberts said.

It is estimated that the cable will improve SA Power Networks' ability to monitor and manage supply in the western Fleurieu and on Kangaroo Island for tens of thousands of customers.

Mark Avoice and Luke Berry, linesmen, hard at work in Mount Compass. 379323

Picture: EMMA HEIDENREICH



## Businesses will get the full benefit

BUSINESSES across Kangaroo Island will be the biggest beneficiaries from the connection of the new 150-kilometre-long fibre optic cable, according to the Business SA 2020 Regional Voice report.

The report highlighted the need for greater telecommunications coverage, with numerous stakeholders on a fibre optic cable connection on the Island identifying coverage and digital infrastructure as among the top issues reportedly affecting their capacity to serve customers and grow their business.

A spokesperson for the RDA said at the time of the survey, the Island had the lowest rate of NBN connection with only 41 per cent of businesses connected.

"The report showed that businesses who were connected had the lowest satisfaction rates of any region with only 11 per cent of businesses satisfied with their connection," the spokesperson said.

"This important project will increase the

capacity, speed and reliability of the islands internet connection."

"The increased bandwidth that will come with the fibre optic connection is critical to future-proof the island by accommodating future advancements in technology [and is] important for digital inclusion and equity."

Over the last few years, funding submissions to the Regional Connectivity Program has resulted in several public infrastructure priorities for Regional Development Australia (RDA).

On the Island, these upgrades are especially important given the fact that the existing connection to the mainland uses microwave technology, is capacity-limited and sensitive to weather conditions.

The upgrade is the first on the Island to take place since 2018, when the current subsea power cable was laid between Fishery Beach on the mainland and Cuttlefish Bay on KI.



Workers installing the undersea cable. 381299

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