



EA NETWORKS, CANTERBURY, NEW ZEALAND



THE CLIENT

EA Networks is a locally owned co-operative network company based in the Mid Canterbury region of New Zealand's South Island. EA Networks owns and operates the area's electricity sub-transmission and distribution network, delivering power to 20,000 customers via 3,200 kilometers (1,990 miles) of distribution lines.

The company also owns an advanced fiber optic communications network, which offers broadband internet services. In addition, EA Networks operates a successful contracting business that supports their electricity and fiber networks and provides services to residents and businesses.

SITUATION

EA Networks focuses on delivering safe and reliable electricity and fiber network infrastructures that support their community and the local economy. They employ a large field services workforce with 80 staff.

Worker safety is crucial at EA Networks. Electricity linesmen must be able to communicate with each other when restoring service after a storm, making routine repairs, or deploying new services.


"For everyone working at EA Networks, safety is more than just a priority, it is a core value and an integral part of every function of our organization"

Myles Connew, Operations Manager, EA Networks


The ability to respond quickly to incidents is very important to EA Networks, because when there's an electricity or communications outage, customers expect a speedy resolution.

RESPONSE

To ensure smooth operations and enhance worker safety, EA Networks operates a six-site DMR Tier 3 trunked network, using Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) services to boost visibility of their mobile workforce. This is integrated via SIP with a Xwire dispatch application featuring a conventional line output to a voice recorder.



CANTERBURY NEW ZEALAND



UTILITIES

LOCATION

EXPERTISE

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- ▶ Tait Service Management Center (SMC)
- ▶ Six-site DMR Tier 3 network
- ▶ Automatic Vehicle Location services (AVL)
- ▶ Xwire dispatch application integration via SIP
- ▶ TM9355 mobile radios and TP9360 portable radios
- ▶ Voice recorder



The DMR network supports a fleet of approximately 80 vehicles with TM9355 mobile radios, plus 30 TP9360 portable radios. The field services team makes use of group calls, individual calls, and status messaging during day-to-day operations.

EA Networks' DMR infrastructure is monitored 24/7 by the Tait Service Management Center (SMC). The Tait SMC uses industry-standard automated monitoring systems to monitor EA Networks' DMR system.

Equipment alarms are assessed using remote diagnostics. If there is a major alarm on the node or base stations that requires action, the Tait SMC contacts EA Networks' service desk. If a site visit is required for service restoration, EA Networks' service desk coordinates with a local Tait dealer for L1 field support.

Tait also provides monthly reports on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) performance of EA Networks' radio infrastructure. Network performance, operational issues, and opportunities for continual improvement are discussed with EA Networks at regular review meetings.

In addition to network monitoring and reporting, a Tait Client Support Engineer is available to provide technical consultancy services to EA Networks.

OUTCOMES

Radio infrastructure monitoring by the Tait SMC enables EA Networks to respond proactively to minimize any interruptions to system availability.

This ensures the mobile workforce can operate safely in the field, communicate effectively with each other and be easily located via AVL should an incident occur. The EA Networks field services team can undertake maintenance work and respond to outages, keeping the lights on for their customers.

Tait also provides monthly performance analysis and recommendations to improve EA Networks' system operation, and a Tait Client Support Engineer assists EA Networks with equipment programming set-up, advice on future product developments and network expansion options.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- ▶ Network monitoring by Tait SMC enables proactive actions to minimize any interruptions to system availability.
- ▶ Equipment alarms are assessed using remote diagnostics
- ▶ Tait SMC contacts EA Networks' service desk in case of an alarm
- ▶ If a site visit is required, a local Tait dealer is available for L1 field support
- ▶ Monthly reporting on Service Level Agreement (SLA) performance
- ▶ Tait Client Support Engineer is available to provide technical consultancy services to EA Networks

“The network monitoring service is really important to us because real-time communication is essential to our business. EA Networks does not have radio techs on staff, we choose to have the experts look after it”

Myles Connew, Operations Manager, EA Networks