



PEOPLE



*Live Substation Technicians,
Lorne Markham and Tony van Melis
at Abermain Substation.*

PEOPLE

ACHIEVING

- surveyed our employees to measure engagement and guide future activities
- reached agreement on a new enterprise agreement with strong endorsement from our employees
- improved our development engineer program
- a new approach to develop the leadership capabilities of our people
- new recruitment strategies that deliver efficiencies and better selection outcomes.

Employee engagement

Powerlink recognises the importance of having employees who are engaged, who strive to perform and deliver on business objectives. Employee engagement at Powerlink was measured with a staff survey in May 2012. Gaining an understanding of our employee engagement is important to the process of delivering our business strategy. The information we gathered from this survey will be used to develop action plans for future initiatives across the business, and will guide the development of practical outcomes to enhance employee engagement.

Participation in the survey was high, with 84 per cent of Powerlink employees taking part. Participation was above the target rate across all sections of our business, providing validity to the survey results. Results from the survey and action plans will be shared with the business in 2012/13.

Covey reenergised

Powerlink has implemented Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* program since 1997. The program has been very successful in helping shape Powerlink's culture and fostering respectful and productive interaction between our people. A review was undertaken during the year to refresh the program and ensure it continues to link directly into Powerlink's business strategy and practices.

CASESTUDY

**IMPROVING RECRUITMENT
PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES**

The efficiency of Powerlink's recruitment processes and the quality of our selection decisions have been enhanced by a number of initiatives introduced this year.

The changes include implementing an online recruitment system so hiring managers can track progress from start to finish. Powerlink also introduced an improved and consistent template for position descriptions, which helps potential applicants to assess their own suitability, skills and experience for advertised roles.

Amy Brutton, Senior Recruitment Services Advisor, said Powerlink had enhanced the support and training available to assist managers to improve their recruitment activities.

"We provide guidance and training for our hiring managers," Amy said. "The training particularly focuses on assessing applicants for team and motivational fit, and finding opportunities to efficiently and effectively assess and reference check candidates against criteria."

Ray Holzheimer, Substation Field Project Manager, has successfully applied the new recruitment strategies to fill field-based, professional and managerial positions.

"The new recruitment process and training adds a lot of value – it saves my time, ensures a standardised process and results in better appointment decisions," Ray said.

"Our position descriptions now more strongly focus on the criteria that really matters to the job, and that helps to select applicants effectively. We then interview with standardised questions to evaluate the applicants' technical fit with the role. Finally, we use improved interviewing techniques to select an applicant with the right behavioural fit.

"The whole process has been streamlined by the improved framework and tools, hand-in-hand with the support and skills training available to managers."

Working at Powerlink Enterprise Agreement

After receiving strong endorsement from our employees, our new Working at Powerlink Enterprise Agreement received final approval from Fair Work Australia and commenced operation on 30 March 2012. The new agreement provides benefits for employees, while balancing legislative requirements, stakeholder and community expectations, key business needs, and underpinning Powerlink's values.

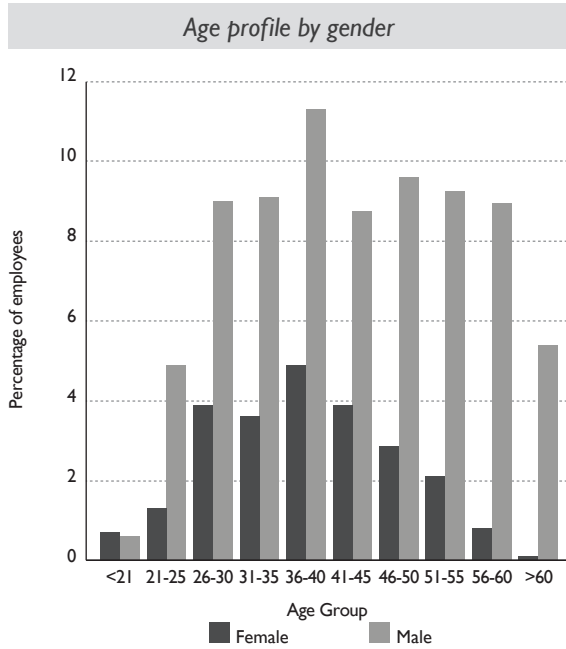
During the negotiation phase, we introduced additional mechanisms to ensure extensive and timely communication with our employees, including updates by email, team talks, drop-in sessions, fact sheets, a dedicated page on our intranet, and a question and answer service.

The Enterprise Agreement was negotiated with our employees and their representatives – the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia (APESMA); the Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia – Electrical Division (ETU); the Australian Municipal, Administrative, Clerical and Services Union, Central and Southern Queensland Clerical and Administrative Branch (ASU); and the Queensland Services, Industrial Union of Employees (QSU).

Workforce profile

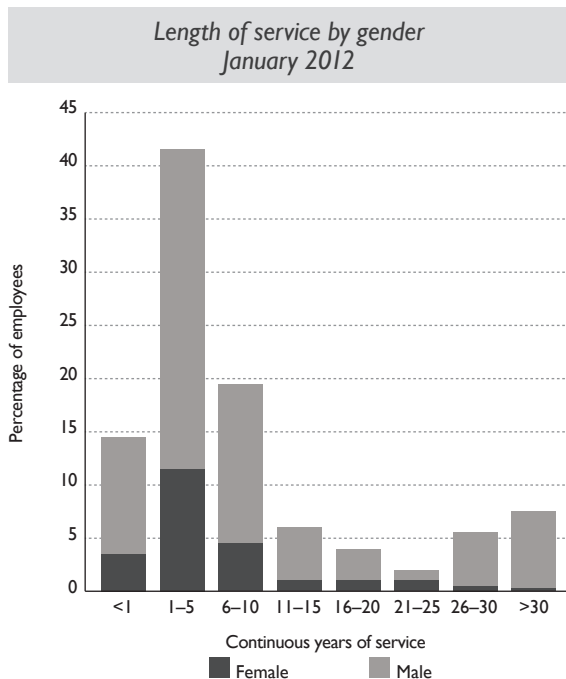
Powerlink employs just over 1,000 people with a range of specialised skills to deliver our business objectives. Our employees demonstrate a high level of commitment and expertise as they perform a range of professional, technical, trade, specialist and administrative roles. Powerlink is firmly committed to a policy of anti-discrimination, which is applied in recruitment, selection and promotion of all employees.

Powerlink's approach to diversity in the workplace creates positive outcomes for the business by ensuring access to the broadest external workforce, particularly in critical skill areas, and to leadership and talent pools. Our employees represent a range of age groups – the Powerlink employee age profile is presented in the 'Age profile by gender' table opposite. In our annual workforce planning, we consider potential retirements and prepare for this through succession planning and by developing skills across the workforce, ensuring critical skills are retained to meet business needs.

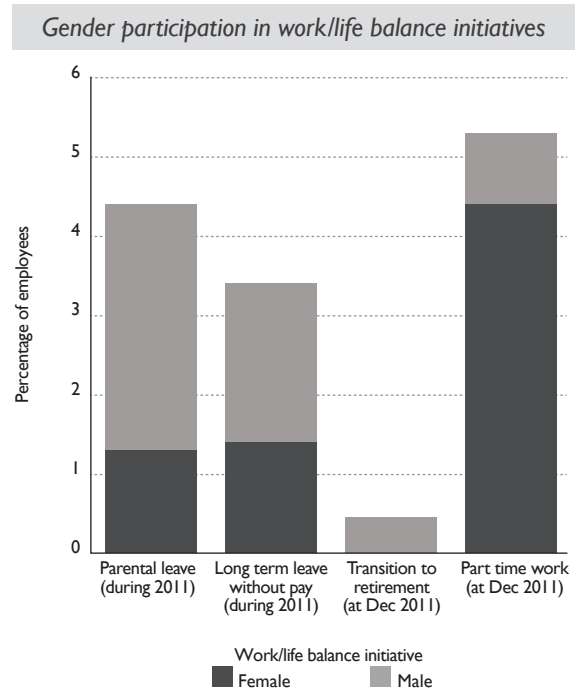


Employees with five years' service or less represent just over half of our workforce, and include the greatest proportion of our female employees. One third of our workforce has greater than 10 years of service. Historically, Powerlink has a low employee turnover: In 2011/12 our employee turnover rate was 4.9 per cent (excluding retirement).

This length of service demonstrates the long corporate memory within the business that contributes to our business capability. It also signals the high skill level of our employees, including the specialised technical capabilities within our workforce.



Powerlink has a suite of work/life balance initiatives designed to encourage and support participation in the workplace, particularly for those employees with family responsibilities. These initiatives include paid parental leave, part time work for parental leave, earlier access to long service leave, job sharing, cultural diversity leave, working from home, purchased leave and phased retirement support. Uptake of these work/life balance initiatives is shared among men and women, with women representing the largest proportion of the part time workforce.



Training and development programs

About seven per cent of our workforce participates in our Trainee and Graduate Development Programs for graduate engineers and information technologists, development engineering officers, administration trainees and apprentices to ensure we have the capability to meet future business requirements.

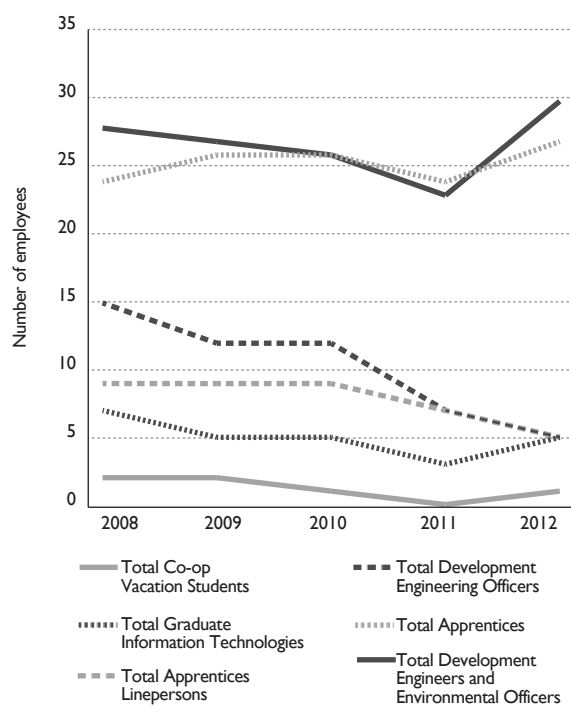
It is our aim that the proportion of female electrical engineers and engineering officers entering Powerlink through development programs is at least proportional to the female student participation rates. During the coming year we expect to put in place actions to facilitate this aim and to measure our progress against it.

In the past year we implemented changes to our development engineer program, focusing on providing participants with a more comprehensive experience across the range of engineering activities within Powerlink.

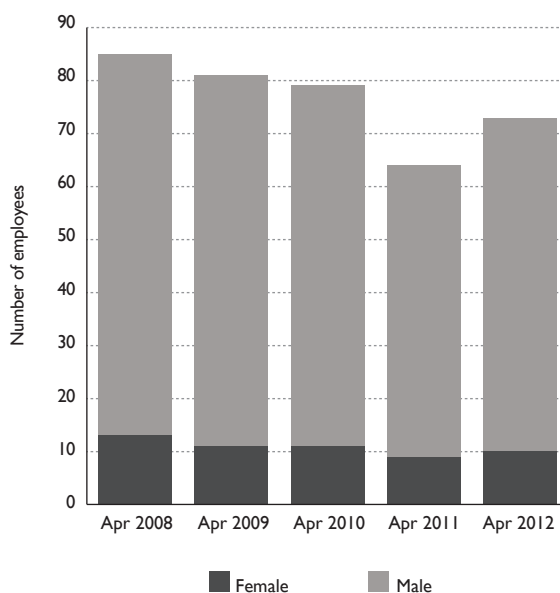
The changes were based on the outcomes of a review undertaken in 2010/11, and included changing the duration of the program from five years to four years, with shorter rotations across a broader aspect of the business. Improvements were also made to the selection process for candidates. To allow these changes to be implemented and embedded, recruitment for the program was temporarily suspended. As a result, the numbers of development engineering officers declined. We plan to increase the number of participants during 2012/13.

A review of the graduate information technologist program will be undertaken in 2012/13.

Employees in development roles



Gender participation in development roles



Management and leadership development

Powerlink's leadership development opportunities include three structured development programs to build the capabilities of our managers.

During 2011/12, a review of our Management to Leadership Program was undertaken to identify improvement opportunities. As a result of this review, we implemented the *9 Conversations in Leadership Program*, consisting of a sequence of externally facilitated group discussions underpinned by contemporary leadership theory. The program is structured to develop and evaluate leadership capabilities, and has delivered demonstrable results in the Australian and South African energy sectors. Currently, 20 leaders are engaged in our program and their experience will be monitored and evaluated to inform our future leadership development strategies.

Our Foundations of Management Series aims to provide all managers at Powerlink with confidence and capability to understand and apply Powerlink policies and procedures related to managing and developing employees. In 2011/12, we offered six modules to managers.

Foundations of Management Module	Number of participants
<i>Employee Development</i> – identifying the development needs of staff and planning to meet those needs.	145
<i>Legal and Risk Management</i> – corporate governance, legal and risk fundamentals.	87
<i>Work Health and Safety</i> – included Powerlink's Safety Management System, overall responsibilities, hazard management, incident and event management, health management, training and authorisation.	106
<i>Change Leadership</i> – insight into the way individuals experience change, and coaching tools and techniques.	60
<i>Navigating the Performance Review Process</i> – planning and conducting effective performance reviews.	100
<i>Effective Resourcing</i> – processes and skills for effective resourcing including documenting clear selection criteria and behavioural interviewing skills.	137

Career progression opportunities

It is Powerlink policy that all positions are advertised internally before they are advertised in an external marketplace, unless there is a strong reason to move directly to external advertising. In this way, Powerlink offers staff opportunities for development and career progression within the business.

Enabling employees to advance their careers and experience new opportunities within Powerlink helps us to maintain a high staff retention rate.

Employee recognition

Recognising excellence in our workplace is one of Powerlink's strategies for creating a desirable culture that helps us to achieve our business goals, and attract and retain high quality employees. Our annual Powerlink Excellence Awards acknowledge individuals and teams who have implemented innovative work practices or initiatives in the workplace and celebrate the achievements of all employees.

Our 2011 Excellence Awards recognised outstanding achievements in the categories of technical, business, safety, leadership and environment and community. In all, two gold, eight silver and 16 highly commended awards were presented to employees across a range of teams.

A number of our employees have received recognition from external parties for their exceptional achievements and potential. We congratulate the following people:

- Chief Executive, Merryn York was named in Engineers Australia's 2012 list of Australia's Top 100 most influential engineers.
- Chief Operating Officer, Simon Bartlett AM received an Order of Australia for service to engineering, particularly to the electricity supply industry in Queensland, and to professional organisations.
- Development Engineer, Sarah Hiley was awarded the University of Queensland E. S. Cornwall Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship enables engineering graduates to gain experience abroad in the electricity industry.
- Manager Environmental Strategies, Stephen Martin received a 2011 CIGRE Technical Committee Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the work of Study Committee C3 – System Environmental Performance. CIGRE is the International Council on Large Electric Systems.
- Research and Development Manager, Dr Dave Allan received the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Power Engineering Society Outstanding Engineer Award (Queensland) for 2011. IEEE is the world's largest professional association for the advancement of technology. In 2011, Dave's appointment as Adjunct Professor at the University of Queensland was renewed for a further three years.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2012/13 and beyond, we will:

- develop and implement a leadership framework and a new leadership development strategy that incorporates recruitment and selection, performance management, reward and recognition, training and development
- develop and implement a talent management framework that focuses on succession planning, attraction and retention strategies, and identifying the capabilities of our people
- develop a technical training strategy that better meets our future business needs
- develop and implement action plans to enhance employee engagement in response to the outcomes of the employee engagement survey
- continue to roll out improvements to our strategic recruitment process.