

Case Study



Cyclone Larry Response, QLD

Specialised Training Centre

Prior to commencing works, all Thiess Services crew members undertook rigorous training at the specially designed electrical training centre located at the Thiess Services QLD/NT/WA Head Office in Brisbane.

This cutting edge training centre is fully equipped to provide staff and contractors with training in all facets of electrical distribution line contracting, including live line training.



Location

Innisfail and surrounds, QLD

Client

Ergon Energy

Value

AUD\$ 1 Million

Duration

March 2006

Contract Type

Verbal Agreement

Referee

Charlie Casa
Ergon Energy

Severe tropical cyclone 'Larry' crossed tropical north Queensland in March 2006, ripping through approximately 12,500sq km's of buildings and infrastructure, damaging 55 per cent of dwellings and businesses in the region.

As a category 5 cyclone, it caused major damage to homes and extensive damage to the electricity network grid in the region. Electricity services throughout Innisfail and the surrounding area was severed, with rail and road access to the area also disrupted, and coupled with some heavy rainfall isolating several surrounding townships due to flooding.

Thiess Services was subcontracted through Ergon Energy to undertake proactive assistance with the restoration of power and maintenance repairs to damaged infrastructure. Electrical crews worked on restoring power to homes, industries and businesses throughout Innisfail and surrounding areas.

The project was carried out in compliance with detailed procedures, and represented an excellent example of the co-operation between all emergency management services and Thiess Services teams, working together in efficiently restoring power, and responding to community needs.

Innovations

Due to the lack of infrastructure available on arrival at Innisfail, Thiess Services personnel set up camp in tent facilities, these were used for accommodation, plant equipment and plant set up prior and during the commencement of works.

Awards & Recognition

The Mayor of Innisfail and the Department of Communities established Recovery Centre formally recognised the efforts and commitment of Thiess Services personnel with a Certificate of Appreciation.



Challenges and Unusual Features

As part of the Queensland Government's Emergency Response team, the extremely short notice period given presented a significant challenge, Thiess Services responded within the first 24 hours of request.

A large number of resources, including up to 60 electrical staff, and 25 plant equipment items were utilised over a 3-week period. Thiess Services provided a team of qualified live line personnel, tools and safety equipment (complete with bucket trucks).

The steep terrains encountered at some places, coupled with the faults experienced due to falling trees caused electrical lines to break, collapsing or short circuiting. Thiess Services was able to schedule these works in conjunction with other existing workloads.

OHSE

Despite the large and extensive structural damage to the electricity transmission line, Thiess Services reported a zero LTI (Lost Time Injury) whilst the area was declared a natural disaster zone by the Queensland Government.

Community Engagement

In response to the devastation, which resulted in widespread power outages, Thiess services expertly met community expectations in providing power restoration with minimal disruptions to the community.