

Electricity network utilities collaborate on improving efficiency, performance and practices

the challenge

Several Chief Executives of Australian and New Zealand electricity distribution utilities formed an industry forum to conduct a series of performance and practice comparisons across a range of focus areas over time. This forum is known as the Leading Efficiencies And Performance Practices (**leapp**) Program.

leapp is an initiative to identify and describe industry best practices, compare performance, and share experiences and knowledge between participating businesses through a series of topical benchmarking studies.

The **leapp** Program Directors Forum sought to leverage the benefits of a benchmarking approach to deliver recommendations which were qualified and supported by appropriate assessment of benefits, investment required, risks and implementation plans. Marchment Hill Consulting developed a methodology with the aim of meeting this core objective for **leapp**.

what Marchment Hill did

As facilitators, Marchment Hill Consulting created the framework of a contemporary and targeted program designed to act as a clear foundation for improvement initiatives. The topic selected by the Program Directors Forum was 'Business-wide reliability strategy, culture and practices'.

The Study consisted of three separate data streams:

- A 'hard' data collection stream – consisting of performance data, expenditure data and a broad overview of practices data
- Focused semi-structured interviews – ten to 20 people from each participating business were identified and interviewed across two days
- Reliability Attitudes and Behaviours Survey (RABS) – an employee survey designed to observe the difference in attitudes and perceptions of factors that may affect reliability performance. This proved to be the largest cultural study conducted in the industry in the last ten years.

Following detailed analysis from Marchment Hill Consulting, several best practice topics were presented at a Best Practices Conference.

At the conclusion of the study, Marchment Hill Consulting provided and presented each participating business with three or more detailed and implementable business cases for network reliability improvement, as well as a number of valuable and comparative contemporary benchmarking charts from both the hard data and the RAB survey results.

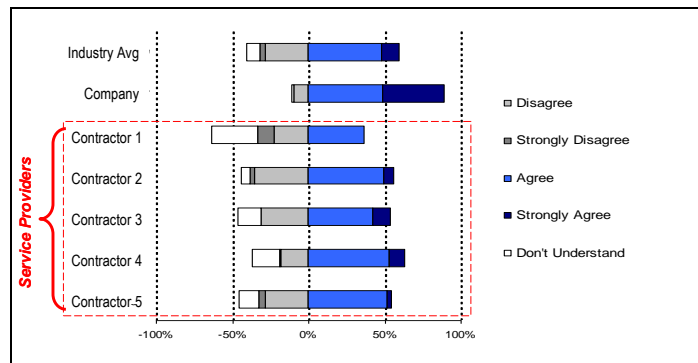


Figure 1: Reliability Attitudes and Behaviours Survey

The outcome to one of the survey questions "I know where our reliability performance is relative to our target."

the benefit

Learning and Interaction – The underlying Program focus is on learning and implementing practices from other participants. Accordingly, a strong emphasis is placed on coordinating interactions between participants, collectively identifying best practices, and supporting the establishment of ongoing learning outside the structure of **leapp**. Since the conclusion of the *Business-wide reliability strategy, culture and practices study*, several participating companies have either played host to, or visited, other participants on study tours.

Actionable and Company-Specific Recommendations for Change – **leapp** aims to deliver practical recommendations for change, not simply charts and data. The primary deliverable for each business was company-specific recommendations for change, supported with business cases for the top three reliability improvement initiatives. The biggest challenge that most business have faced since the study is finding the resources to implement the change initiatives. However, many companies have found Marchment Hill Consulting's insights to be invaluable in modifying existing programs and approaches, as well as implementing new best practices.