



CASE STUDY: Vector Pole Replacement Programme

As part of its proactive maintenance programme, network company Vector United Networks contracted Connetics to carry out replacement of red tag poles, and later yellow tag poles, throughout Newlands, Tawa, Johnsonville and Plimmerton.

OVERHEAD

www.connetics.co.nz

PROJECT SCOPE

The project involved the replacement of concrete and wooden poles, initially on a pole-by-pole basis, then allocated on a suburb grouping basis. Connetics was one of a number of contractors working on similar projects in the Wellington region.

CHALLENGES

Connetics needed to plan for a sustained programme of work in an area where the company had no plant and equipment, no staff and no physical base. In addition, the Wellington network was completely different to the one in Christchurch - comprised almost entirely of concrete poles in hilly terrain. The Wellington work spanned two local authority areas with differing requirements. There were unfamiliar requirements for traffic management, and different construction standards.

Connetics had to engage vehicle maintenance services, subcontractors for excavation and resealing, and arrangements for testing live line tools and equipment. In addition, the project needed to be resourced from our Christchurch operation due to existing resource constraints in the Wellington region.

OUR RESPONSE

Our first step was to plan the work to ensure priority was placed on red tag poles and that a clear work programme was established for our



teams. We then undertook refresher training for all staff to prepare them for the different requirements and conditions on the Wellington network. A site was quickly identified for a temporary Wellington base and two crews were mobilised.

Connetics' staff were offered the opportunity to transfer for the duration of the Wellington contract, or to rotate through a roster.

SOLUTIONS

Plans were put in place to enable us to respond to ongoing work demands and significant events in Christchurch. During the contract we had to temporarily withdraw crews to deal with a major supply emergency in Canterbury. The work came to an orderly pause and resumed on a revised schedule in response to this event.

RESULTS

This project demonstrated our ability to mobilise and undertake significant project work outside the Canterbury region.

"Connetics were very responsive in providing competitive pricing, and had the capability to set up to work remotely in the timeframe needed. Our visits to Christchurch and initial discussions gave us confidence in Connetics' ability, and assurance that we would be able to work together effectively.

"As was to be expected, with a new contractor and a project in its infancy, there were some surprises for both parties. Connetics' adaptation was not without setbacks, but what impressed was their ability to rise to the challenges of different network configuration, standards and local authority requirements.

Overall Vector received good service at a good price, enabling us to meet our network safety, continuity of supply and financial targets. We would be happy to work with Connetics again."

Paul Bartlett
Project Manager
UnitedNetworks
(A division of Vector Ltd.)