



# Security solution generates more value for energy supplier

## Security Challenge

Like many utilities companies, electricity distribution network operator Western Power Distribution (WPD) has undergone major organisational changes in recent years.

In 2011 it extended its established business serving South West England and South Wales with the acquisition of two additional licences for the Midlands. This saw the company triple its asset base to supply electricity to 7.8 million customers over 55,500 square kms, supported by 220,000 kms of overhead lines and underground cables plus 185,000 sub-stations.

Before the Midlands acquisition, Reliance High-Tech managed security installations and service across the South West and South Wales to create a safe and secure environment for staff and visitors and reduce exposure to copper cable theft at sub-stations, a growing threat that can disrupt power supplies while putting the public and workers at risk of injury. Following the expansion, WPD found itself with a disparate security infrastructure in need of consolidation. This created a clear opportunity to transform protection of the estate, assets and revenues while generating more value for the business via an integrated security management solution.

However, WPD first had to understand and qualify its entire asset base. Only then could the company start to benefit from streamlined logistics, reduced administration and faster fault response times to ensure consistent delivery against its targets and regulatory requirements.

## The Solution

The first challenge for Reliance High-Tech was to create an accurate inventory of WPD's key assets, including depots, office locations and sub-stations. With a fragmented, inconsistent mix of asset records as a legacy of the acquisition, a thorough audit was conducted at around 600 priority sites. At the same time, existing security provision was thoroughly evaluated, including CCTV, access control and intruder deterrents. All information was validated, standardised and combined to assist WPD with a planned roll-out to minimise risk to the distribution network.

Armed with this intelligence, Reliance High-Tech has complemented one of the largest integrated CCTV and intruder detection solutions of its kind in the UK at hundreds of WPD's most critical locations.



*"The security of the UK's electricity supply and the safety of our staff is mission critical. Reliance High-Tech has delivered a truly integrated solution allowing us to centrally manage and monitor our large estate to ensure compliance and increase protection of the public and our staff."*

*Huw Evans,  
Project Distribution Manager  
and Security Lead,  
Western Power Distribution*

The roll-out included the integration of electrified fencing with more than 1,000 Predator CCTV cameras into WPD's centralised Cardax command and control centre in Cardiff for remote monitoring and management. Intelligent alarm management combined with CCTV verification gave WPD's security experts the ability to initiate an immediate and appropriate response to security breaches while alerting staff to potential thefts and hazards.

For geographically remote sites Reliance High-Tech worked with mobile telecommunications operators to provide secure, stable connectivity links with WPD's command centre. In addition, the RHT team performed rigorous and thorough testing of the entire system.

### Benefits and results

Reliance high tech has brought WPD's entire security portfolio onto a comprehensive maintenance contract, moving from a reactive model to a fully integrated security supply chain framework. Consequently, WPD now benefits from optimised end-to-end 24/7 proactive protection for all key assets, reducing operating costs, minimising risk and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.

#### Specific outcomes include:

- A robust security infrastructure that protects the assets through which WPD supply electricity to more than 7.8 million people
- Optimised performance, efficiency and customer service that is helping WPD to fulfil its licence commitments
- Security engineers now 'know before they go' the source of problems and how they can be swiftly rectified
- The ability to respond fast when power supplies are disrupted to identify the source of any problems and take appropriate action
- Complete transparency of all asset information, risk and performance data so that regional budget holders can easily allocate security resources
- Prioritisation of maintenance and upgrades to reflect the most pressing requirements

The cumulative impact of this proactive integrated approach to security management is enabling WPD to implement a rolling programme of continuous improvements for all of its key assets that will reap benefits for years to come.



### Looking ahead

*Enabling WPD to drive ongoing savings, improve performance and focus on customer service is helping to give the company a keener competitive edge on which to build for the future. For instance, WPD is committed to an extremely high level of customer care, aiming to personally answer every customer call promptly and minimise power outages. During violent storms of winter 2014, for example, the granular level of detail about its estate assets put WPD in a stronger position to quickly restore power following network damage.*