

Market Segment: Standby Power Generation

POWER PROFILE

RIC Electrics - 2AAA, Wagga Wagga

BACKGROUND

The tragic loss of life and damage to property caused by bushfires and natural disasters in recent years led to a rethink by State and Federal governments on how best to keep rural and remote communities up to date with critical emergency service warnings and information.

The Federal Government Agency - Emergency Management Australia (EMA) was tasked with coordinating governmental response to emergency incidents and implement fail-safe emergency management capabilities throughout the country.

As part of the strategy Government grants were made available to community groups to assist with the upgrading of communications infrastructure to ensure that in the event of a mains power outage during storms, fire and other natural disasters communication of vital information could be maintained with residents in the effected areas.

Wagga Wagga based community radio station 2AAA FM responded to their local listeners concerns and applied to EMA in 2007 for a grant to install two emergency power generators.

With a broadcast footprint that takes in portions of the NSW Riverina and South West Slopes weather districts black spots the application for funding was approved and the station's management set about the daunting task of finding the right solution.

According to 2AAA's Operations Manager, Chris Jacobson, being a

community radio station they don't have the resources on-tap, so they looked for a supplier who could provide a turn-key solution.

REQUIREMENTS

After preparing a scope of works that included a generator for the radio station and one for the broadcast tower, the ancillary electrical switching and wiring work and assistance with the complicated compliance conditions that came with the grant they approached a number of local electrical companies for quotes.

"We received three tenders for the project but in the end local company RIC Electrics demonstrated a better level of understanding of our requirements, while still delivering an extremely competitive turn-key solution and assistance with the compliance issues.

SOLUTION

"RIC Electrics recommended two Olympian generator sets on the basis that they were proven performers, represented exceptional value for money and were backed by the national Caterpillar network – so we'd always have access to local service and parts if required.

"Once the project got underway RIC Electrics' input into the installation of the generators really proved invaluable, even down to the positioning of the bigger generator at the radio station.

"Originally the building was built to house a generator in the basement, but on RIC Electrics' recommendation we chose to locate it outside the building as it



A proud day for the Riverina with (left to right) Federal Member for Riverina, Kay Hull, Wagga Wagga City Council Mayor, Kerry Pascoe, RIC Electrics', Bruce Duff, Rural Fire Service Superintendent, Joe Knox, and 2AAA Chairman, Jean Haste, attending the handover ceremony.

CUSTOMER

Radio Station 2AAA FM

LOCATION

Wagga Wagga, in the Riverina district of NSW

CUSTOMER ISSUE

As a leading broadcaster in the Riverina district of NSW, 2AAA FM was eligible to apply for Emergency Management Australia funding to ensure that in the event of mains power outages during storms, fire, or other natural disasters communication of vital information could be maintained with residents in the effected areas.

In order to maintain an on-air capability standby power generators were required for both the studio complex and the broadcast tower.

SOLUTION

As a community run radio station 2AAA lacked the internal resources of their commercial counterparts, so after tendering the project appointed RIC Electrics to design and install two complete turn-key systems and assist with the complicated compliance issues that came with the grant.

PRODUCTS

Olympian GEP 11SP and GEP 65 complete generator sets.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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OLYMPIAN™
GENERATOR SETS

would greatly reduce the impact on the station's operation when the generator was running.

"And while initially we were concerned about the potential impact the noise might have on our surrounding neighbours RIC Electrics assured us that the Olympian's sound enclosures were the best on the market – and they were correct. We haven't had any negative feedback even when we've had to run the generators for 2 days straight.

"The original plan was to run both generators for short periods every month and then run them under load for extended periods every 2 months. But as it turned out the region was hit by a number of severe storms that wiped out power to the town, so they've been put to the test on a regular basis and have enabled us to continue to broadcast important information to the community that they'd otherwise not have had access to.

RESULT

"RIC Electrics support throughout the entire process was exceptional and their tradesman ship in all aspects of the project was excellent, while the Olympian generators have performed as we were told they would and have really paid for themselves in the short time we've had them by keeping us on air," Chris said.

Chris Orban from RIC Electrics managed the project and was responsible for designing the two tailor-made systems so they would fit within the parameters of the grant 2AAA received.

According to Chris, because the broadcast tower was located at another site 2AAA required two standby emergency power systems to ensure that both the studio and the broadcast tower would remain operational during blackouts.

"Based on their equipment's power requirements we built a solution around a single phase Olympian GEP 11SP generator to handle the broadcast tower's amplifiers and a three phase

Olympian GEP 65 generator for the studio complex.

"Rated at 11 kVA and 65 kVA, both Olympian generators were supplied on heavy duty fabricated base frames complete with inbuilt 45 and 245 litre fuel tanks respectively and housed in state-of-the-art sound attenuated enclosures.

"The project included the manufacture and installation of a new distribution board at the studio and extensive rewiring of the switching equipment at the broadcast tower, all of which was completed within 6 weeks – which in part was made possible by Energy Power Systems being able to supply the Olympian generators from stock.

"The project was not as straight forward as most when you take into account that the studio was located in a residential area and we recommended installing the bigger genset outside the building, plus the extensive documentation required to comply with the grant.

"On the noise front, we had to be certain that the Olympian's attenuated sound enclosure was up to the task, and 12 months on they have performed brilliantly with no complaints received from neighbours," Chris said.

ABOUT OLYMPIAN

Olympian generator sets are manufactured at Caterpillar's ISO 9001 certified facility in the UK and represent a lower entry level product range that boasts CAT performance with exceptional fuel efficiency and proven performance for standby and prime power applications up to 550 kVA.

Available for use with diesel fuel, propane, or natural gas, Olympian generator sets deliver dependable, clean economical power even in the most demanding conditions and can be configured to meet the needs of any application, all backed by EPSA's and Caterpillar's extensive nationwide support networks.

POWER PROFILE

ABOUT RIC ELECTRICS

Based in Wagga Wagga NSW, RIC Electrics was formed by Colin and Bruce Duff in 1979 and now service the needs of customers along Australia's eastern seaboard.

With a dedicated staff of over 40 experienced technicians, RIC Electrics specialise in electrical contracting services, process automation, switchboard manufacture, electric design and consultancy, teledata services, optical fibre cabling, energy management and fire alarm services.

According to RIC Electrics Managing Director, Bruce Duff, they became an Olympian dealer 2 years ago as they wanted to be able to provide their customers with a quality range of generators that were supported nationally.

"Prior to becoming an Olympian distributor if a project came up that involved power generation we'd shop around and take the most suitable solution that we could find and that was available.

"So when the opportunity to represent Olympian in the region presented itself we did some research and found their product range and reputation for quality to be a perfect fit for us, when RIC Electrics puts its name on something we want quality.

"In our opinion, Olympian generators represented exceptional value for money with a construction quality that is second to none. Their engines are tried and tested and the complete genset packages are put together professionally and look very stylish.

"And as an added bonus they are backed by Energy Power Systems Australia and the Caterpillar network, which is a major draw card for a lot of our customers.

"Since becoming an Olympian dealer we couldn't have asked for better service and support from Ken Fackler and the Olympian team, and it's been a pleasant change dealing with people to whom nothing is ever too much trouble and where supply of product is never an issue," Bruce said.



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