

The sun never sets on ATDI



A collaboration between ATDI in the UK and its Australian sister company has meant 24-hour attention to the planning and modelling of a TETRA and wireless LAN network at a gas terminal in Western Australia.

“When it’s night in Australia it’s light here,” says ATDI UK lead engineer Nick Kirkman, “which meant that we could start on a problem at the end of my working day and have results in my inbox by the time I got up.”

Nick adds that the partnership between ATDI sister operations also means the company can bring flexibility to any problem it faces. “If one office is busy, it can spread the workload with another one somewhere else in the world,” he notes. “It gives each office lots of extra resources to call on when they are needed.”

They were needed to help create a TETRA network providing voice communication for staff on the sprawling site. The wireless LAN was largely for visual monitoring of systems and portable computer equipment.

“It was a particularly tricky planning and modelling job because the site was full of obstacles,” Nick comments. “The first step was to take the site CAD drawings and process them into a GIS format. This activity took some time since a careful audit was required to confirm the various objects were of the correct size and height.”

The radio planning was then undertaken so that a worker anywhere in the plant would have service. This meant that repeaters had to be deployed to fill in areas where shadowing caused loss of service. Once the optimal repeater positions were identified ATDI achieved full coverage of the gas terminal depending on the receiver location under normal working conditions.

When fully operational, the plant will process 12 million tonnes of natural gas a year, which is extracted offshore into a liquefied form ready for transportation.