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**Satellite system to revolutionise cathodic protection**

Thursday, February 16, 2006

**AN AUSTRALIAN satellite communications specialist is preparing to release an online remote monitoring and control system that could revolutionise the corrosion management industry.**

Perth-based Fastwave Communications said the new cathodic protection (CP) monitoring technology could have applications in protecting the long-term integrity, safety and reliability of steel pipelines, bridges, jetties, offshore platforms and other infrastructure.

Cathodic protection systems are designed to inhibit corrosion through the application of a cathodic current through the structure.

Fastwave's new solution offers real-time monitoring and control of remote cathodic protection on any infrastructure anywhere in the world through the use of its Iridium Satellite Short Burst Data (ISSBD) telemetry system.

The company has integrated advanced data acquisition and control hardware with a satellite system and online data delivery mechanisms to enable seamless condition monitoring and control of the transformer rectifiers (TR) that are used on cathodic protection systems.

"The technology is particularly suitable for pipeline CP systems, due to their large scale and the very remote, inhospitable terrain that they often traverse," Fastwave said.

The company has entered into a technical and commercial partnership with fellow Perth company Advanced Cathodic Protection for the development of the technology.

Advanced is a leading designer and manufacturer of transformer rectifiers, which are widely used on cathodic systems in Australia's oil and gas, pipeline and utility industries.

The system developed by the two companies has three basic components to the system: a remote module consisting of an advanced micro-controller interfaced with the transformer rectifier, a satellite transceiver and compact satellite antenna; low-cost, bi-directional ISSBD, providing near real-time data delivery from any location in the world; and database management and secure, online data delivery.

"Using the system, a corrosion engineer can remotely monitor and adjust operating variables such as pipe potential measurements and TR output current from a desktop or laptop with an internet connection," Fastwave said.

Reporting intervals and parameters can be remotely selected and adjusted, and alarms delivered via email or text message if thresholds are exceeded.

A global positioning system fitted to the remote terminal allows synchronised



current interruption and the system is also available with high-bandwidth satellite, short-range radio and Global Standard for Mobile (GSM) communications options.

The technology can be integrated with existing Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems or operate as a stand-alone system.

Extensive testing and refinement of the technology is currently being undertaken to allow a commercial release in the first half of 2006.

"As Australia's pipeline infrastructure ages, the need to efficiently monitor pipeline CP systems is growing in order to provide the higher levels of integrity management necessary to meet regulatory requirements," Fastwave said.

The company said the system could significantly reduce the requirements for expensive and time consuming field intervention on cathodic protection systems as well as offering enhanced performance through more timely data availability.

"This can help to extend the lifespan of the pipeline through superior corrosion control and management," it said.

The technology can also be used for monitoring and controlling remote wells, valves, meters, pumps, motors, timers, tank levels, vibration and strain gauges, sensors and automatic weather stations.



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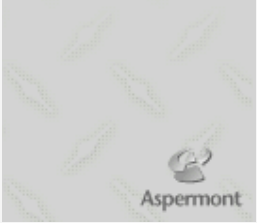
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