

Remote Operations Centre run by IPACS helps mid-tier mining and energy companies

CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL The Advertiser September 08, 2015 12:00AM



Mining operations will be able to be monitored remotely from Mawson Lakes.

MINING and energy companies will be able to monitor remote operations in real time from a facility in Mawson Lakes using the latest technology.

The centre, operated by IPACS Australia, aims to save resource companies millions of dollars by reducing labour costs and enabling rapid response to issues as they arise.

The centre, officially opened by Mineral Resources and Energy Minister Tom Koutsantonis, will assist mid-tier companies use the sort of sophisticated sensing equipment employed by the major firms.

“In an economic environment of sharply lower commodity prices, it is vital that South Australian businesses embrace technological innovations that can deliver more cost-efficient operations,” Mr Koutsantonis said.

“Companies using the Remote Operations Centre will be able to more accurately detect faults before they occur, which reduces maintenance costs and increases reliability, productivity and efficiency.”

Taxpayers have contributed \$660,000 toward the \$2.1 million centre. Commercial partners are the University of South Australia, HP, OSIsoft and pilot customers Lucas TCS/Arrium and Thiess/OZ Minerals.

IPACS Australia managing director Kailash Nath Sriram said remote monitoring was commonly used for traffic flow and water reticulation management.

“Now, we are monitoring the real-time asset performance of mining vehicles, boilers, smelters and mining fixed-plant infrastructure for some of the world’s largest miners and contract miners,” he said.

“Mining service operators can deploy sensors across essential operational equipment in their mines and oilfields thousands of kilometres away, stream that data back to this operations centre, where it is plugged into diagnostic models that use smart mathematics (algorithms and predictive analytics).

“Remote operators can then readily assess equipment performance and schedule repairs or maintenance only when required, reducing operating costs, maintaining or increasing production, and, vitally, averting costly production shutdowns.”

In the trial period for the centre, one of the tests involved sensors attached to wheels of mining trucks to detect gear box wear and to ore crushers.

This had enhanced maintenance response to prevent major problems before they arose.

The Remote Operation Centre is one of the foundation projects under the Mining and Petroleum Services Centre of Excellence.

Mining cuts costs by remote

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