

Powerful new energy technology fits old spaces to futureproof MLC centre



The new Fuji SMBE Macquarie Switchboards (left) were modular in construction to fit into the curvature and tight confines of the room at the MLC Centre (right)

Sydney's 67-storey MLC tower has upgraded a series of switchboards, to ensure continued reliable supply as tenant power requirements continue to change and accelerate.

Lead electrical contractor on the MLC upgrade project, Barnwell Cambridge, chose Australian-manufactured Fuji SMBE Macquarie switchboards due to their reliability and modular construction.

"We were contracted to replace the main switchboards, generator switchboards and PLC switchboards, and they needed to suit the tight confines and unusual shape of the room," explained Mr Peter Silsby, Director, Fuji SMBE Macquarie.

[▶ Watch a video of the MLC upgrade project](#)



“The existing switchboards had been operating reliably for years, but as more and more tenants moved in, and electronic needs continued to change and advance, MLC was forward-thinking enough to look at the future and make sure reliable supply, as well as back-up power, was always available,” said Mr Silsby.

“New switchboard technology has the ability to monitor every circuit via a high level modbus interface utilising the latest Schneider Micrologic 5.3E circuit-breakers, which provides benefits to building and facility managers, as well as tenants,” he said.

“There were installation challenges, with components having to go through a load-limited goods lift, and the switchboards reassembled inside the switch room. It took a lot of cooperation between stakeholders for it all to come together successfully.”

Compact, modular switchboards

Fuji SMBE Macquarie specified its iNTELECT™G3 switchboard systems, because they are compact and modular, allowing them to be reassembled on site.

The iNTELECT™G3 system is the 3rd generation of the company's iNTELECT system, and it has been engineered in Australia for Australian conditions. Major advantages over previous technologies include adaptability, versatility, safety, strength, and compact size.

“MLC’s Switchboard components were unloaded in the loading dock and Barnwell Cambridge used specialised hydraulic furniture movers that fix to each side of the switchboard tier. This meant that they could be moved safely and efficiently to the appropriate rooms on levels 4, 26 and 54, ready for reassembly,” said Mr Silsby.

A staged approach

To safely and efficiently remove all the old switchboards and install the new ones – with minimal disruption to the building’s tenants and visitors – a staged approach was adopted.

Firstly, the old switchboards were disassembled and removed in sections. Then the new ones were loaded into the appropriate rooms where they were reassembled on site by Fuji SMBE Macquarie’s qualified technicians.

“We’d like to acknowledge the vital assistance of the team at ER&D Consulting Engineers, who provided a comprehensive specification detailing the existing installation and exactly what was required in the new switchboards,” said Mr Silsby.

“Another key supplier was Schneider Electric, who supplied reliable, proven circuit-breakers for the switchboards. The collaboration between all companies involved in this project was world class,” he said.

Project success leads to further work

The MLC switchboard upgrade project was successfully completed on-time and on-budget, with all stakeholders working seamlessly together to deliver the best outcomes.

The project was such a success that MLC has decided to use Fuji SMBE Macquarie switchboards on two further ongoing upgrades – their high voltage and retail centre upgrades.

“To be rewarded with further work straight away is a testament to the hard work of our entire team, and the other stakeholders in this upgrade project. We’re delighted that MLC was happy with the job, as well as confident that we could deliver further favourable results in the future,” said Mr Silsby.

Fuji SMBE Macquarie

39 Lyn Pde, Prestons NSW 2170

Ph: +61 2 9733 0600

sales.nsw@smbe.fujielectric.com

<http://smbemacquarie.fujielectric.com>