



Monday, 26 September 2022

## NO QUICK FIX FOR LOAD SHEDDING BUT REAL PROGRESS IS BEING MADE

Dear Fellow South African,

For every person living in this country, the past two weeks of load shedding have been extremely frustrating and challenging. The widespread public anger is wholly justified.

With Eskom forced to once more implement load-shedding to protect the national grid, individuals, households and businesses have had to contend with power interruptions for up to four hours at a time.

Loadshedding is beyond an inconvenience. It has dire consequences for nearly every part of our society from education to public safety to the provision of health services. Large and small businesses alike are losing money and the energy crisis is endangering investment and our economic recovery.

There is a sense of despair that the situation does not seem to be improving and that there appears to be no end in sight to this crisis.

Yet, even in the darkness of load shedding there is and must be an end in sight to our electricity crisis. We are making progress in the implementation of the additional actions I announced in July, even though the effects may not be immediately felt.

Given the unpredictable performance of Eskom's fleet of coal-fired power stations, we will not be able to eliminate loadshedding in the short term. This is the unfortunate reality of our situation, which has had a long history.

Our goal in the immediate term however is to reduce the frequency and severity of load shedding by addressing power station breakdowns.

This is a significant challenge given the average age of power stations, and that in the past critical maintenance was not undertaken at the necessary intervals.

Eskom is urgently implementing measures to improve plant performance, which is a priority until new generation power projects are brought online.

It is addressing the critical issue of coal supply, including working with Transnet on the transportation of coal and monitoring the consistency of the supply from collieries to stations. Eskom is also addressing the poor quality of coal, which often leads to plant breakdowns. People with experience in running power stations are being brought back to help with plant operation, management and mentorship.

To ensure that critical maintenance is undertaken without delays, discussions are underway to ease local content requirements for spare parts and to use the equipment manufacturers to undertake maintenance.

To address the immediate energy shortfall, Eskom has since July worked on procuring emergency power, and in the last week launched power purchase programmes for 1,000 megawatts of emergency capacity from companies with existing generation capacity and to secure imports from neighbouring countries.

Government is giving close attention to the skills, experience and capabilities of the Eskom leadership to ensure that the company has the best people at all levels of the organisation.

These interventions will help to reduce the severity and frequency of load shedding as we are bringing new power onto the grid over the medium term to increase energy supply.

Last week, government signed power purchase agreements for 420 MW with the first three preferred bidders under Bid Window 5 of the renewable energy programme. The three projects are expected to connect to the grid in October 2024, and preparations are underway to sign with the remaining 22 preferred bidders.

The amount of generation capacity to be procured from Bid Window 6 will increase 2,600 MW to 4,200 MW.

The National Electricity Crisis Committee I appointed in July is attending to the legislative and policy reforms that will establish a more efficient, competitive electricity sector.

We have published for public comment the amendment that removes the licensing threshold for private generation projects. This will pave the way for investment in larger, utility-scale projects that will rapidly add new generation capacity to the grid.

The need for environmental authorisations has been waived for transmission infrastructure in strategic corridors where risk to the environment is low.

The timeframes for energy projects receiving land use authorisations and grid connection approvals has been substantially reduced, as has the National Energy Regulator's registration process for generation facilities.

While we work to increase the supply of electricity, we must increase efforts to reduce demand, particularly at peak times.

We must come together as citizens to alleviate the pressure on the national grid. This means using electricity sparingly, reporting illegal connections and paying for the electricity we use. Businesses, households and government departments that owe Eskom must pay up so that Eskom is better able to undertake the critical maintenance that is needed to keep the lights.

As we continue to experience load shedding, there is a great temptation to give up hope that we will ever solve this problem.

Yet, if we look just beyond the most immediate crisis, there are real signs of progress and good reasons to be optimistic.

As we work with greater urgency to fix the immediate problem of an unreliable power system, we are also busy laying the groundwork for a sustainable, lasting solution to the country's electricity woes.

With best regards,



**Building a society that works**  
Find out more about the Presidential Employment Stimulus



Copyright © 2022 The Presidency, All rights reserved.

**Our mailing address is:**  
The Presidency  
Union Buildings  
Government Avenue  
Tshwane, Gt 2001  
South Africa

Subscribe to our newsletter