



MEDIA RELEASE

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STATEMENT ON LOADSHEDDING IN KSD'S AREAS OF SUPPLY

There is a complaint from our customers that loadshedding is more intensive in the KSD compared to other areas or Towns, Cities and Metros in South Africa. As the institution we share the same concern.

We felt the need to issue this statement to clarify the matter of loadshedding because a perception in the public platforms is being created that it is KSD that is responsible for loadshedding her customers.

Loadshedding is a National problem where the demand for electricity is more than the available generation capacity and this balance between generation and demand is managed by the System Operator at National Control of Eskom. From time-to-time National Control issues instructions to Regional Control Centers in the Provinces to remove a specified amount of electrical energy from the grid when there is a shortage of generation capacity. This is what is called loadshedding.

Loadshedding is a very important human intervention to manage grid stability as failure to do so the grid is capable of doing loadshedding by itself by shutting down all the generators connected to the grid leading to total National shutdown, something that South Africa has never experienced, and nobody knows for sure how many days, weeks or months would it take for the grid to recover.

From the picture we have painted, it is clear that there is no debate when loadshedding is demanded and only Eskom National Control is in charge and regional Control Centers must carry out loadshedding targeting loads which when removed from the grid will cause the supply/demand balance to be restored. KSD and other redistributors have got no say on the matter. Only those redistributors like who have their own generation capacity like City Power and the City of Cape Town are able to shield their customers from higher stages of loadshedding and mines and other highly intensive energy users because of their contractual arrangements with Eskom.

Coming home at KSD where we agree with some of our customers that the frequency and duration of loadshedding is excessive, it is the fact for the past three months Eskom Regional would load shed Mthatha 1 remotely and after loadshedding has ended when they are supposed to restore power remotely

the circuit breaker would refuse to close remotely. After the breaker fails to close remotely, they would dispatch an operator to go on site and close the breaker manually. This takes time delaying restoration. The operator would try to close the breaker and the breaker would not close because of a mechanical failure and a Specialist team of Eskom would be called to undertake repairs. This team would also take time to fix the problem. We have had cases where a Two-hour load shedding outage would take Six to Seven hours because of this breaker problem. At this stage this problem is recurring from time to time and the Eskom technical team is not disclosing what the root cause of the problem is except to say it is old and there is no immediate plan to replace this breaker.

The other problem that we have started to experience in the last two months is a situation where copper thieves are taking advantage of the extended loadshedding hours to dig up our copper cables to steal copper, leading to localized long hours of outage and the power does not return at the expected time because a piece of cable has been stolen. The other problem we are experiencing due to loadshedding is the more than normal failure of equipment like mini substations, transformers and cables due to electrical stresses they suffer.

All these factors have got a huge impact in both our customer experience and our electricity revenue due to the loss of sales. We hope that we have clarified the issues around loadshedding and their negative impacts. As KSD we do not have control on loadshedding and what happens at Eskom.

We stand ready to engage further if more clarity is required. We do negotiate with Eskom and sometimes successfully in cases where there has been delay in restoration after loadshedding to skip the next scheduled loadshedding to compensate for the delay to give relief to our customers. Sometimes we do not succeed depending on the generation capacity available as loadshedding is undertaken as the last resort by Eskom to prevent total grid collapse.

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