

Ramokgopa says end of load shedding 'within reach'



By [Lindsey Schutters](#)

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Minister in the Presidency responsible for Electricity, Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, expressed optimism that the country's chronic power shortages may soon come to an end. The encouraging outlook comes as Eskom achieved an Energy Availability Factor (EAF) of 65.5%.



Minister in the Presidency responsible for Electricity briefs the media on the implementation of the Energy Action Plan

Highlighting the improved reliability, Ramokgopa commented, "[This] marks a significant milestone in resolving the energy deficit [load shedding] in the country."

He added that the EAF confirms "the success of the aggressive maintenance-led recovery strategy" and "signifies the most efficient path to ending load shedding."



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Eskom has seen a decrease in unplanned outages, which bodes well for stability. The return of several major generation units, totalling 2,580MW in capacity, is expected within the next six months.

Additionally, the government-backed rooftop solar rollout nears its target of 6,000MW installed capacity by year-end. Private sector projects will further increase power generation.

"We have indeed turned the corner, the ending of load shedding is within touching distance," Ramokgopa said.

Eskom's statement and outlook

In its own statement, Eskom highlighted a remarkable 35 consecutive days without load shedding and noted improved overall performance. For the upcoming winter season of 2024, Eskom forecasts limiting potential load shedding to Stage 2, a major improvement from previous scenarios.

The utility cited several factors for the hopeful outlook, including a reduction in equipment trips, the return of offline power units, and the successful completion of major maintenance projects.

"In a strategic move to improve the reliability of our generation fleet for winter 2024, we consciously increased the planned maintenance during the summer months of 2023/24 to an average of 8,000MW. This decision was aimed at securing long-term operational benefits and ensuring the stability of the energy supply," remarked Eskom CEO Dan Marokane.

"The peak of planned maintenance was executed between December 2023 and January 2024, where we reached an average of 18% of the generation capacity. The last time we saw a similar surge in planned maintenance was around November and December 2020."

“ *The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) has declared May as this year's National Energy Month to highlight energy conservation in the country and to urge South Africans to reduce energy consumption daily. Eskom is joining in to create awareness and support...* pic.twitter.com/Lj6Lbtjn7n— Eskom Hld SOC Ltd (@Eskom_SA) [May 2, 2024](#) ”

While acknowledging the challenges still facing South Africa's power grid, the government and Eskom are resolute in addressing these issues.

The power utility encourages continued public support for energy-saving measures.

ABOUT LINDSEY SCHUTTERS

Lindsey is the editor for ICT, Construction&Engineering and Energy&Mining at Bizcommunity

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