



## Loadshedding power cuts – what is really going on? 25-26 October 2021

### NSTF Discussion Forum Concept Document

#### What is loadshedding?

According to Eskom loadshedding is a controlled process that responds to unplanned events in order to protect the electricity power system from total collapse. As South Africa's primary electricity supplier, Eskom's mandate is to ensure security of supply to service the South African economy and society. This is not always the case and as a result South Africa experiences loadshedding, rolling blackouts or load reduction. Wikipedia explains: "A **rolling blackout**, also referred to as **rotational load shedding**, **feeder rotation**, or a **rotating outage** is an intentionally-engineered electrical power shutdown in which electricity delivery is stopped for non-overlapping periods of time over different parts of the distribution region. Rolling blackouts are a last-resort measure used by an electric utility company to avoid a total blackout of the power system." Rolling blackout - [Wikipedia](#).

#### Purpose and Objective

What is stopping Eskom and municipalities from carrying out their mandate is a question asked by many South Africans. This Discussion Forum will attempt to bring essential answers to the public as well as shed light on the possible solutions and steps being taken to solve this problem. We invite experts to discuss the complexities of managing power supply and how the implemented strategies have (or have not) addressed the electricity crisis in South Africa.

#### Background

As much as all the responsibility falls on Eskom to provide electricity it is actually a collective responsibility to ensure there is a sufficient supply of power to meet the demand in the South African economy and society. Various government departments, including the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation and the Provincial departments are supposed to work hand in hand to ensure that the South African population inhabits legal land with provision of infrastructure as per their human rights. According to the article [Tensions in the transition: The politics of electricity distribution in South Africa](#), South Africa faces a large and rapidly growing urban population.

The effects of loadshedding has a crippling effect on the quality of life in South Africa from the economy, to education, to the health care system. With the current COVID-19 pandemic power supply affects the quality of vaccine rollout as the Pfizer vaccine needs to be stored at below zero temperatures. A secure power supply in the time of COVID-19 also becomes essential when staff of

companies are working from home. This continues to be a problem and emphasises the inequality in South Africa as the worst affected are the poorer communities.

According to a speech by the South African president Cyril Ramaphosa on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021, a major change to fix loadshedding is the amendment of schedule 2 of the Electricity Regulation Act to increase the NERSA licensing threshold for embedded generation projects from 1 MW to 100 MW.

## References

<https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-amendment-schedule-two-electricity-regulation-act-10-jun-2021-0>

<https://loadshedding.eskom.co.za/LoadShedding/Description>

[Wikipedia](#).