

MEDIA STATEMENT

Unit 1 of Koeberg is currently being synchronised back into service

Monday, 02 February 2015: Eskom technicians are in the process of performing start-up tests in an effort to bring back to service Unit 1 of the Koeberg power station which was taken offline yesterday following a technical fault on the generator transformer. The transformer had experienced an earth fault, which has now been addressed.

Unit 1 is expected to be fully operational by the end of this week, which will increase capacity going into the weekend.

At no stage during the incident, was there any threat to the reactor or nuclear safety.

Minister of Public Enterprises, Lynne Brown, welcomed the efforts by Eskom's technicians to work around the clock to find the fault. "Although Unit 1 is expected to be fully operational by the end of the week, it is important that the grid is stabilised. The grid remains constrained and I appeal to South Africans to continue saving electricity by switching off geysers, air conditioners, pool pumps and all non-essential appliances," said Minister Brown.

Eskom's acting Chief Executive Dan Marokane says: "We want to thank all South Africans for continuing to heed our message to use electricity efficiently. We request sustained savings as we continue with our maintenance plan and efforts to balance demand and supply".

"We took a decision not to start the planned Unit 1 outage earlier due to contractual obligations and associated costs. As such, the unit will still go out on a scheduled shutdown on Monday 09 February 2015, and is expected to return back to service at the end of May. Currently Koeberg Unit 2 is operating at full power, sending out 930 MW to the national grid," Marokane added.

The scheduled shutdown of Koeberg Unit 1 is part of Eskom's overall maintenance programme for its fleet of power stations.

Every 16 to 18 months, each of the two units at Koeberg is shut down for refuelling, inspection and maintenance. The routine shutdowns are scheduled so as to avoid having both units out of service at the same time and to avoid the winter months in each year.

During these routine planned outages, one third of the used nuclear fuel is replaced with new fuel. Statutory inspection and maintenance is performed, and modifications, that will ensure that international safety standards continue to be met or that improve the plant performance, are implemented.

Eskom calls on all South Africans to pull together over the next few months and use electricity sparingly by "Living Lightly" this summer. Homeowners and businesses can assist in reducing the load on the power grid by following just four steps: first, switching off geysers and pool pumps; second, switching off non-essential lights; third, efficient use of air-conditioners by keeping the room temperature at 23°C; and finally, responding to the alerts on TV each evening.

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