



**CITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

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A City of Johannesburg Press Statement by  
the Executive Mayor, *Cllr Herman Mashaba*

## **ESKOM keeping the City in the dark, again**

16 October 2019

Release: immediate

I have learnt with disbelief this morning that Eskom has initiated level 2 load-shedding this morning.

Eskom's initiation of this latest round of rolling blackouts has once again kept the City of Johannesburg in the dark. No prior warning was issued and no engagement with the City took place to advise us of the possibility of this step being taken.

As a major metropolitan municipality, and the economic hub of our country, it is essential that the City of Johannesburg is able to communicate to its residents and business community. Any opportunity to provide any form of advanced warning affords people and businesses the opportunity to make alternative arrangements.

This latest round of load-shedding emphasises the need for cities to develop alternative forms of power production that will produce a level of independence from an increasingly unreliable Eskom.

In December 2018, we received a letter from Eskom stating that the City could not offset our load shedding requirements with the power independently generated from the Kelvin Power Station.

Kelvin Power Station is an independent power producer that the City had been contracted to for the procurement of additional electricity as and when required. Upon taking office, Eskom withdrew from funding this arrangement and left the City to foot the bill.

We have informed Eskom that we reject their position of refusing our request to offset load shedding with independently generated power, and are willing to proceed to the courts to fight for the residents of Johannesburg to receive this benefit for which they are already paying.

If our residents are paying for it, and it is not being generated by Eskom, there is no rational basis for preventing us from using the 200MW produced at Kelvin to mitigate the crippling effects of load shedding.

This is equivalent to what we have to shed in Johannesburg during stage 2 load-shedding.

My intent goes beyond this. A team from the City is engaging the Kelvin Power Station to see whether a new contract could be negotiated that would see their output increased, and sold to the City at a cheaper rate than Eskom.

If this is achieved, the City has the license to procure 600MW from Kelvin, which has the ability to prevent all load shedding up to, and including, Stage 6.

Despite their inability to provide the country with a stable supply of electricity, Eskom's tariffs have risen by a compounded 368% over the past decade. In the beginning of 2019, I opposed Eskom's tariff proposal of 13.1% on behalf of our residents whose household income is under siege. The response was to increase the tariff further to 15%.

The reality is that South Africans are paying for the failure and corruption that has crippled Eskom over many years. We are being made to pay through increasing tariffs and the loss of economic growth and job creation which will inevitably follow, particularly with the uncertainty.

It is inconceivable that the City of Johannesburg has the ability to protect its residents and economy from the crippling impacts of load-shedding, yet we are being frustrated from doing so.

The City will ensure that it is doing everything within its power to manage the consequences of this latest round of load-shedding through JMPD traffic management, JRA's teams to restore traffic lights, and City Power's teams to deal with the tripping of sub-stations that typically follow load shedding sessions.

**Issued by:**  
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