

National Assembly question: Question 61

61. Mr D C Ross (DA) to ask the Minister of Energy:

With regard to the load shedding that took place in the KwaDukuza Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal during November and December 2010, (a) what plans are in place to deal with the electricity supply shortfall in the (i) immediate and (ii) medium terms, (b) what contingency plans are in place to alleviate the ongoing power supply shortages and lower the frequency of power failures in the KwaDukuza area and (c) what plans are in place in the longer term to avoid this from recurring, given the anticipated 2011-2016 rolling blackouts? NW71E

REPLY

(a) (i) In the immediate term?

The KwaDukuza Municipality has urged consumers to use electricity efficiently and to switch off unnecessary appliances and equipment during peak times or high demand times. Critical maintenance has been undertaken in the major points of the electricity network. Large industries have been requested by the municipality to reduce their demand. It was reported from Nersa that KwaDukuza municipality will be providing them with the detailed projects that have to be undertaken to improve the power supply situation when they apply for their tariff increases in May/June 2011.

(ii) In the medium term?

Energy Intensive users in the area, such as SAPPI and Mondi, have committed to either increase their co-generation plant outputs or build additional co-generation plants so as to reduce the electricity demand from the KwaDukuza municipality network.

The drive towards sustainable Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management will be intensified. NERSA has encouraged the KwaDukuza Municipality to include the revenue required for implementation of the abovementioned measures in the tariff application of 2011. The municipality will also be required to upgrade some of its substations to increase their capacity.

- (b) The KwaDukuza municipality is undertaking refurbishment of its network to reduce the frequency of outages whilst at the same time negotiating with energy intensive users to reduce their demand.
- (c) Energy Efficiency and Demand Side Management by all South Africans will significantly contribute towards the prevention of the rolling blackouts. KwaDukuza Municipality will be required to increase the drive and focus on such initiatives.

The commissioning of the co-generation plants by the energy intensive users in KwaDukuza, as part of the implementation of IRP Project, will reduce the demand and henceforth limit the anticipated rolling blackouts.

KwaDukuza will be required to enhance the maintenance of its network as well as undertake refurbishment of the aged network.