

Power utility under the spotlight from all quarters

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PROFESSOR Raymond Parsons NWU Business School Economist:

"We must not underestimate the extent to which the current Eskom load shedding now poses an increasing risk to South Africa's (SA) economic recovery, to growth prospects and to job creation. The ongoing lack of energy security and predictability in SA is causing widespread disruption to business, especially small business. Business costs are rising as power 'blackouts' go to the next level in this country."

It now also puts a serious question mark over the key growth forecasts that must form part of the forthcoming Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement due this week. Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana needs to have confidence that his best forecasts of future economic growth in SA will not be weakened by uncertain extensive load shedding.

There now needs to be the necessary urgency and leadership to at least identify creative short-term measures that could help to better manage and stabilise the immediate situation.

Cas Coovadia, Business Unity SA (Busa) chief executive:

Busa notes the calls for the resignation or termination of the Eskom executive leadership and board. Busa rejects these calls and stands with the Eskom leadership in these difficult times. It does not help to exacerbate the ongoing operational crisis by creating a leadership and governance crisis at Eskom. We are of the view that this leadership has taken tough decisions, shown remarkable openness and transparency and, critically, developed a progressive future-looking plan.

Eskom's leadership has been clear, given the state and age of the plant, maintenance alone will not address the real and worsening supply crisis – new

capacity must urgently be added to the grid.

Busa also believes we need to pull together as a country, as we demonstrated a Team SA effort at COP26, to address this crisis. The cost to the economy, including to small and medium enterprises, and the severe inconvenience and cost for citizens is becoming incalculable.

Busa thus offers to mobilise capacity, as we have consistently offered to government, to work with the Eskom team to make significant progress in addressing the short-term issue of load shedding, but also to address the myriad issues at Eskom in a systemic way.

Black Business Council (To read full story go to BR online):

The Black Business Council has called for the resignation of Eskom chief executive Andre de Ruyter and other senior executives after Eskom announced another round of stage 4 load shedding

on Monday.

In a statement, the council said while it initially supported De Ruyter's tenure, it was now calling for him and the entire Eskom board to step down.

Former Eskom chief executive Brian Molefe (To read story go to BR online):

Molefe trended on social media amid calls for the removal of De Ruyter due to Eskom continuing to roll out load shedding in the country.

Social media users took to Twitter to voice their unhappiness with De Ruyter's management of the parastatal, observing that load shedding had hit record-highs under his watch.

User Joshua Mafolo said: "The problem with Matshela Koko and Brian Molefe is that they avoided load shedding at any cost by racking up billions of rand buying diesel in order to keep the lights on".