



PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 14 February 2024

Solar PV was not to blame for Stage Six

Electricity Minister Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa's comments over the weekend on the cause for an escalation of load shedding are not a true reflection of reality. In a media briefing, the Minister identified (among other factors) "nonperforming renewables" as the cause for stage six being implemented.

"We hold the Minister in the highest of respect. He has an important role to play in guiding the nation towards an energy-secure future where our economy can once again grow and flourish. We believe he deeply understands the role that various energy types play in the realisation of this dream, and it is for this reason that we wish to factually correct his statements," says Dr. Rethabile Melamu, CEO of the Solar PV Industry Association (SAPVIA).

A power update issued by Eskom (on Saturday 10 February) confirmed that they had,

"... faced setbacks due to multiple generating units being taken out of service (ten generating units). A total of five generating units (50%) were taken out of service due to boiler tube leaks Unplanned outages are at 17 798MW of generating capacity, while the capacity out of service for planned maintenance is at 6 653MW."

Melamu says the Minister's comments at the weekend misrepresented the role that renewable energy (and, in particular, solar PV) had to play in the nation's energy mix.

When stage six was announced late Saturday evening, total renewable production was 1661MW, more than double the total production during the same hour the previous week, when Loadshedding was at stage 2. Furthermore, the total wind and Solar PV production was 95% of the average hourly renewable production for the period from 28 January to 11 February, a 360-hour period. Without the renewable energy production, stage 7 or 8 would likely have been implemented.

For the period being referenced by the minister, Wednesday the 7th to Sunday the 11th of February, average hourly renewable production was 2098MW, shielding South Africa from approximately 2 stages of loadshedding.

"I look forward to the chance of engaging directly with the Ministry to ensure an accurate reflection of solar PV's contribution," says Melamu.

SAPVIA has made available on its website a data portal, which shows the installed solar PV capacity in South Africa. (<https://sapvia.co.za/dataportal/dataportal-public>)

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- *SAPVIA is the voice for the solar PV industry in South Africa. For more information, visit www.sapvia.co.za*

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