

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

(Form of Petition to Parliament)

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

The Petition of the undersigned ¹

Farmers and Community of Tzaneen, Limpopo, represented by AGRI Letaba.

Respectfully sheweth: That²

Due to severe electricity outages, power dips, low voltage and poor to none maintenance the area is experiencing since 2016 and the failure of the **Greater Tzaneen Municipality** since then to:

1. Assist with sustainable solutions;
2. Accept our offers of assistance till date, we request that the relevant Ministers and their Departments: (a) Investigate the Municipality's Electrical Department and its Director;
(b) ensure that correct procedure is followed with outstanding accounts;
(c) a **Technical Audit** on all the electrical equipment on the network be undertaken immediately which must co-exist with the Municipality's Master Plan for the next 5 to 10 years.

Wherefore your petitioner (or petitioners) prays (pray) that the Honourable Parliament will be pleased to take his (or their) case into favourable consideration, and grant such relief as it may deem fit.

And your petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Submitted by Indubaut (WP) 24/6/2020 (Signatures to follow)

¹ Here insert (a) in the case of one petitioner, name, description and place of residence and (b) in the case of more than one petitioner, description and place of residence.

² Here set forth the case or circumstances to be brought to the notice of Parliament and the nature of the relief asked for.



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Groter Letaba
Constantia
Tzaneen
Leydsdorp
Trichardsdal
Mooketsi

ONS BOU LANDBOU

PETITION DOCUMENTS HAND DELIVERED

DATE: 8 JUNE 2020

HANDED TO: DESIRE VD WALT – DA REPRESENTATIVE

The petition includes the following documentation:

- Cover letter – short description of the Electricity crises in the Greater Tzaneen area
- A few supporting letters from consumers over the last 3 years.
 - Groep 91
 - Cashumi
 - HK Houers
 - David Brown – Agatha Community
 - Mabunda Citrus
 - Granor Passi
 - Stephan van Rensburg Attorney
 - Johan & Cora Potgieter - Missionaries
- Summary of Electricity Events from 2016 to date
- Signed petition documents

For more information or documentation please contact:

Naomi Excell

Office Manager – Agri Letaba

015 307 2725/083 272 1998

Pieter Vorster

Chairperson – Agri Letaba

083 259 5511



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8 June 2020

Attention: Speaker of Parliament

Hand-delivery

AGRI LETABA PETITION AGAINST GREATER TZANEEN MUNICIPALITY – ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT

We, the undersigned request the urgent attention from the Speaker of Parliament

Agri Letaba is a farmer's association that falls under the Greater Tzaneen Municipality in the Mopani district of Limpopo.

One of the main income contributors and job creation sectors in the area is the Agricultural Industry.

Due to the severe electricity outages, power dips and low voltage that the area has been experiencing since 2016, Agri Letaba as a members organisation contacted the Greater Tzaneen Municipality to not only express our concerns of the impact of the quality of supply, but also to offer our assistance.

Please find enclosed a summary of the Electricity Events to date; that includes the following:

- Issues raised since 2016
- Steps taken, meetings held, and correspondence sent to express our concerns with the GTM
- Steps taken, meetings held, and correspondence sent to NERSA to ask for assistance
- Steps taken, meetings held, and correspondence sent to the Chief of Machinery and the Dept. of Labour expressing our concerns regarding the Health and Safety issues.

All the letters and correspondence that are listed in the summary are available on request.

In the summary you will get an idea of the frustrations that we have been experiencing that include, but is not limited to the following:

- The lack of quality of power supply that leads to equipment breaking down and equipment loss worth millions
- Crop losses and production loss
- Money spent on running generators
- Investment opportunities lost due to the power supply requirement, especially in manufacturing
- Health and Safety of customers and electricians: Three of the most serious reports regarding Health and Safety;

- Life lost – See response from Carol Mthethwa; Occupational Health and Safety officer regarding an incident that has been reported. Inspection was supposed to be done, but never happened other than a Compliance Audit.
- Mr Hubble's Ram - a live wire (that has been reported many times) was on the ground and his sheep was electrocuted and died. This could have been a person.
- Nouvelle la Cotte also reported an electricity box that caught on fire. This fire could have spread and burned down their whole farm.
- Nonchalant approach from the GTM's Electrical Director regarding our concerns.

We would like to make the following suggestions to the Honourable Speaker:

- Investigate the Greater Tzaneen Municipality's Electrical Department and Director.
 - These issues have been raised since 2016 with little or no feedback from the Electrical Department or Director.
- As per our last meeting the Greater Tzaneen Municipality has outstanding account fees worth R180 million.
 - If the correct procedure is being followed with outstanding accounts; notice period and then cut-off of power supply, customers will pay their outstanding accounts giving the Greater Tzaneen Municipality the much-needed income for their repairs and maintenance on the network.
- We recommend that the Greater Tzaneen Municipality undertake a Technical Audit
 - A technical audit is not just a check list; it is an audit on all the electrical equipment on the network and it should co-exist with the Municipality's master plan for the next 5 to 10 years.
 - You will see that a plan was put in place for the Letsitele area, which we hugely appreciate and if the municipality can afford it a lot of our problems will be solved. However, only a technical audit will ensure that the long-term plan is feasible, reliable, and realistic.

We are frustrated beyond believe and request your intervention here because we have tried all other options.

The issues raised here are likely to be problems throughout South Africa. We hope though that our suggestions, in-puts and our willingness to help will pave the way for Parliament to assist Municipalities throughout South Africa.

Yours Sincerely

Pieter Vorster
Chairman of Agri Letaba – representing Greater Tzaneen Farmers and Community



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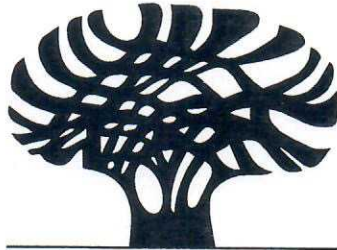
Yours Sincerely



Pieter Vorster

Chairman of Agri Letaba – representing Greater Tzaneen Farmers and Community





GROEP 91 UITVOER

Posbus 77
Letsitele
0885

30/03/2020

To: Whom it may concern

r.e. Petition to Parliament concerning the power supply by the Greater Tzaneen Municipality

Groep 91 Uitvoer (Pty) Ltd is a Citrus and Macadamia farming operation located in Letsitele, Limpopo province. Our products (Lemons, Grapefruit, Oranges and Macadamia nuts) are all grown and packed on the farm and exported worldwide. We are providing work for 250 full time workers and 325 part time (6 months of the year) workers. The citrus industry in Letsitele Valley is a valuable source of foreign currency for South Africa as well as the primary job creating industry in this predominantly rural area.

Due to the intense nature of farming, irrigation and the pumping and transferring of water plays a pivotal role in the production process. During the packing season the pack houses requires ample electrical power to operate and effectively process the large volume of fruit. The dependency of our industry on stable, reliable electric power supply is of the utmost importance. Currently the power to the Letsitele area is supplied by the Greater Tzaneen Municipality (GTM), which supplies power under a licensing agreement from Nersa.

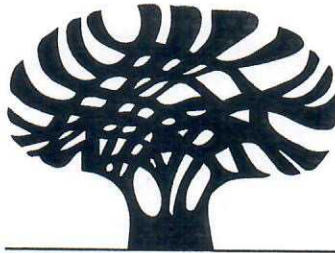
Over the past four and a half years the reliability of the electric power supply as well as the electric reticulation and distributions infrastructure was a major cause for concern – **to the extent that we, Groep 91 Uitvoer (Pty) Ltd, perceive it as our biggest thread, even more so than the current 5-year drought.** We have daily power outages on most of the 30 electrical connection points at the various production unit – substantially more than the allowed Nersa licensing requirements. Due to a lack of maintenance of the reticulation infrastructure as well as the network protection and transformer (33kV to 11kV) substations, the current electricity supply capacity is totally insufficient resulting in daily power outages, under voltage scenarios and power spikes. To this extent refer to photo 1: Riverside substation, which shows a 33kV to 11 kV substation outside the farm gate that is supposed to be equipped with two of 2 MVA transformers (currently no transformers). Similarly refer to Photo 2: The Plains Substation showing a single transformer in place of a two-transformer configuration.

Apart from the frequent power outages and unreliable power supply, the fault reporting call center of the GTM appears to be not functioning. The official call center for fault reporting is also totally lacking with the official telephone number (015 3074356/ 015 3072567) not in service and the vast number of various electrician numbers either not available or non-responsive. The electricity

GROEP 91 UITVOER (Pty) Ltd.

Farm La Gratitude LT513, Giyani Road R529, Letsitele. Po Box 77, Letsitele 0885
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Reg.no. 1996/008851/07 VAT: 4220164943 | GlobalGAP: GGN4049928986672

Directors: BC van Rooyen, JS Pretorius, HA van Rooyen, AJ van Wyk



GROEP 91 UITVOER

consumers are currently reliant on various "Whatsup" groups with community representatives administering these groups and reporting the problems to the GTM via individual contacts at the GTM. Once again this is in contravention of the Nersa license requirements.

To ensure continuity of operations, Groep 91 Uitvoer (Pty) Ltd was forced to install fixed (250 kVA at the pack house; 50 kVA at the office) generators to ensure continuity in production as well as two mobile generators (50 kVA and 100kVA) that are moved around to prevent total production loss at various pump stations (24 off). The capital layout for these generators were R 1 092 000.00 (2018). An additional two mobile 100kVA generator are on the capital budget for the 2020/2021 financial year (R 531 718.00). The operating cost (diesel) of these units in 2019/2020 financial year amounted to R 407 000.00, this over and above the electric utilities bill of R 4 802 000.00 from the GTM. The production loss due to sub-optimal irrigation is impossible to calculate but amounts to millions of Rands.

Due to the overloading of the network, power spikes and under voltage conditions are in the order of the day. This leads to the destruction of various sensitive electronic equipment like pumps controllers (VSD and soft starters), computer and server infrastructure at the packhouse and any other sensitive communication, telemetry, household and computer equipment on the farm. The cost of said damage was calculated at R 247 000.00 during the 2019/2020 financial year.

All of the above financial implications limit the profitability and viability of our organization that will eventually result in the reduction in new and existing job opportunities.

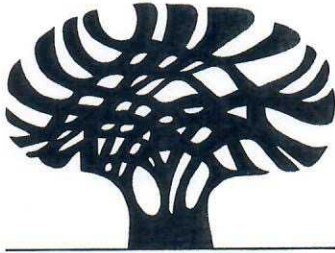
Groep 91 Uitvoer (Pty) Ltd, in the person of mr AJ van Wyk (PREng) form part of the Electricity forum, that was established as part of the Nersa licensing requirements, and was actively involved in engaging the GTM over this period of time. The farming community, at various forums offered their assistance and resources to assist the GTM in the maintenance and upkeep of the electricity network. The GTM never accepted the help from the farming community but opted to appoint contractors.

Apart from the unreliability of the power supply the safety of the electricity reticulation network is of concern. At various occasions high voltage lines (11kV) made short circuits that did not trigger any safety procedures and trips but remained live until attended by the GTM maintenance teams – sometimes up to 3 hours after it was reported. On one of the farms operated by Groep 91, the earth wire of an overhead high voltage powerline (11kV) was live due to close proximity to the overhead line. If one of my workers operating in and around the orchard touched the line it would have resulted in instant death by electrocution. **This is unacceptable!!** When I approached the relevant GTM authority about the incident he said he will look into it – I never received any feedback from the relevant representative, nor has the cause of the incident been addressed.

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We as a farming community are desperate and are looking towards parliament to assist us and the broader rural community of Letsitele in resolving this matter as soon as possible. We look forward to your positive response.

For any further information please contact me, A J van Wyk on (015) 345 1671 or 082 783 5603 or via email: kobus@groep91.co.za.

Regards

Kobus van Wyk
Technical Director: Groep 91 Uitvoer (Pty) Ltd
MEng (Mechanical); PREng.

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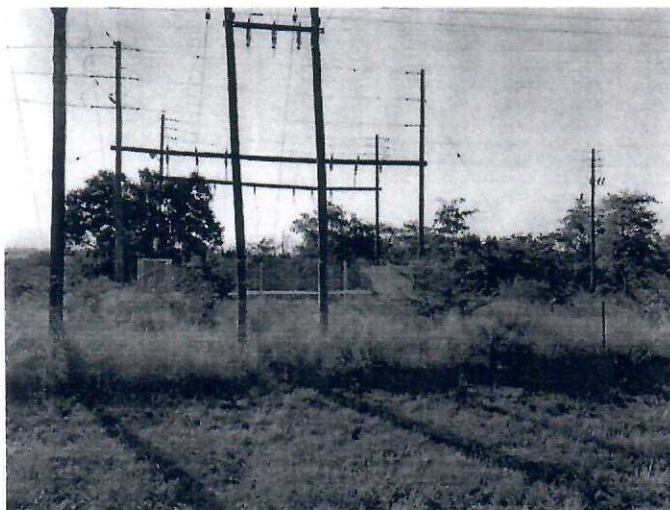


Photo 1: Riverside Substation with no installed Transformers

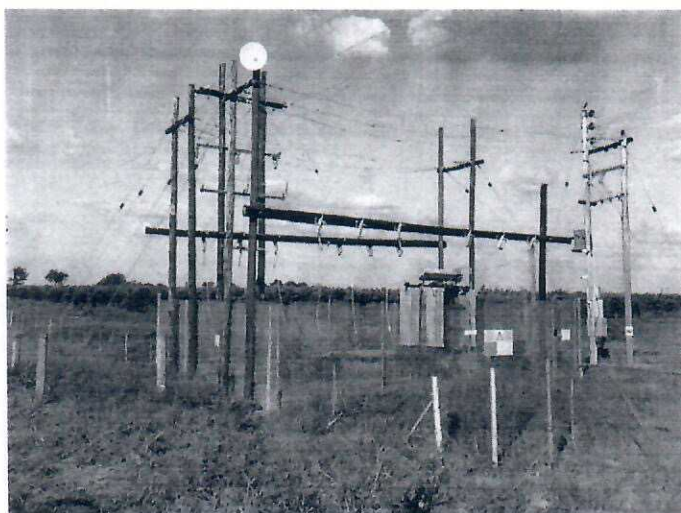


Photo 2: The Plains Substation with single transformer

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