

## **MINI PLENARIES (BUDGET VOTES)**

Vote 34: Minerals Resources and Energy

Hon. MN Nxumalo, MP

21 July 2020

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Honourable Chairperson,

During this declared period of a State of National Disaster, South Africa finds itself grappling with social and economic ravages brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It therefore remains critically important that this Department deliver upon its mandate, especially in terms of prioritising the frontline services it provides for households and businesses, whilst particularly focussing on our poor and most vulnerable.

With a net change to baseline being a downward revision of R1.574 billion, this Department will have to strive to fulfil its mandate with less resources.

The President alluded recently to a crisis also presenting an opportunity. In this regard, the Department should view this time of austerity as a period in which to re-engineer its outputs; in a sense it should be looking to do more, with less!

Of major concern to the IFP is the reduction in the Integrated National Electrification Programme [INEP] Eskom Grant, which will further delay the implementation of bulk infrastructure projects, household connections and reduce targets concerning electricity connections. This is most serious in the Provinces of the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, where we find the greatest number of backlogs.

South Africans should not be waiting longer for their homes to be electrified.

Chairperson, Eskom as a functional entity remains questionable in terms of electricity supply output, with marked instances of load-shedding taking place nationally during this period of lockdown.

With a steady supply of electricity being critical not only to our citizens during this period, but just as important to business - which is already operating at its lowest rung - it becomes imperative that demand for electricity is met, without interruption.

Of equal importance is that COVID-19 related safety and preventative measures are being implemented at our mines, in adherence to the government's regulations, rules and guidelines.

Consultants must be used sparingly and only where necessary, as they are a major drain on the budget. Their continued use must be looked at comprehensively in the future.

In conclusion, the IFP supports the adjusted budget.

We support adjustments relating to non-core activities, without affecting departmental major deliverables.

I thank you.

**Contact:**

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072 819 5153