

**DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC ENTERPRISES**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: PQ 1110**

**QUESTION:**

**1110. Mr G K Y Cachalia (DA) to ask the Minister of Public Enterprises:**

With reference to Eskom suspending stage two load shedding between 10:00 and 14:00, in order for the nation to mourn the passing of the King on 18 March during the memorial service of King Goodwill Zwelithini,

1. How did Eskom arrive at the decision to suspend load shedding for the memorial service,
2. What criteria were used to arrive at the decision,
3. By whose instruction was the suspension agreed to and
4. What total amount did Eskom spend on diesel fuel to provide uninterrupted electricity supply during the period? NW1297E

**REPLY:**

**According to the information received from Eskom:**

On 17 March 2021, Government requested Eskom to suspend load shedding for the duration of King Goodwill Zwelithini’s memorial service on 18 March 2021 from 10:00 to 14:00. The System Operator evaluated the request and concluded that this was technically possible without putting the power system at risk and would not result in a higher stage of load shedding either before or after the memorial service.

The following was taken onto account:

* The stage of load shedding before and after the memorial service would not be increased from Stage 2 load shedding that was being implemented at the time.
* The load shedding that was being implemented was necessary to ration the remaining fuel at the pumped storage and OCGT power stations, as these resources were running low on diesel and water in the top reservoirs.  The suspension of load shedding would require additional generators at these power stations to be dispatched utilising some additional fuel.
* The duration of the suspension of load shedding was only four hours.
* Load curtailment of industrial customers would not be suspended.
* The suspension of load shedding would take place during the late morning and early afternoon when there was a reduction in demand.
* The event was considered to be in the national interest and is allowed by NRS048-9, the standard that governs load shedding in South Africa.
* A number of generating units were expected to return to service that afternoon and early evening.

In order to supply the additional demand due to the suspension of load shedding, the System Operator dispatched four additional OCGTs from 09:42 until 14:10.  These OCGTs supplied 2 404 MWh (approximately R8.5 million) during this period with a maximum output reaching 610 MW.  Furthermore, pumped storage generation was dispatched and supplied an estimated additional 2 240 MWh with a maximum additional capacity of 626 MW dispatched.  Between 12:00 and 14:00, four coal-fired generators returned to service adding 1 935 MW of capacity to the system, although it takes many hours to ramp these generators to their maximum capacity.

Eskom has the technical capacity and expertise to evaluate each situation and make a sound, technical decision.

**I trust that the Honourable Member is not opposed to efforts such as these being made, when appropriate and technically possible?**

**Remarks: Reply: Approved / Not Approved**

**Kgathatso Tlhakudi Pravin Gordhan, MP**

**Director-General Minister of Public Enterprises**

**Date: Date:**