Kusile Unit 4 returns, load shedding down to Stage 4

After a 20-day planned maintenance, Kusile Power Station's Unit 4 has returned to service, potentially restoring a maximum generating capacity of 800MW to the grid. Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister in the Presidency for Electricity explained during an Energy Action Plan media briefing on Sunday that the unit, which came back online on Sunday morning, also reduces Eskom's planned maintenance load.

Mnister Ramokgopa at a recent visit to Kusile. Source: x.com

Units 1, 2 and 3 of the power station located in Mpumalanga were put offline due to a flue-gas desulphurisation (FGD) mechanism that was damaged in October last year. This affected stacks at the units. He said that these are expected to come online between October and the end of November 2023.

"We've been able to shed a month on the return of unit 3 and the expectation is that we should be able to return this unit by 14 October. The same is applicable for unit 1. We should be able to get it on 30 October."

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On progress made on unit 2, the minister said the team initially was of the view that the unit would return on 24 December. However, this has been revised to 30 November 2023.

He reiterated that Kusile is central to addressing the load shedding question, because "we will need significant more additional generating capacity to be able to address this".

In recent weeks the country has been experiencing various stages of load shedding including Stage 6.

In an update on Sunday afternoon, Eskom said that due to further improvements in generation capacity, Stage 2 load shedding will be implemented from 4 pm until 4pm on Monday.

Thereafter, Stage 4 load shedding will be implemented from 4pm on Monday until 5 am on Tuesday. This will be followed by Stage 2 load shedding from 5am until 4pm.

Maintenance work at Kusile

"This pattern will be repeated daily until further notice," it said.

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