

Eskom switches off Koeberg Unit Two for 5-month period

Eskom said it will be switching off Unit Two of the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station on Monday, 17 January, for a five-month period for refuelling and maintenance. The unit generates at least 920MW of power for the country, with its last successful outage successfully completed in October 2020.



Source: Koeberg power station © [Eskom](#)

Eskom's chief nuclear officer, Riedewaan Bakardien, said although the outage may put strain on electricity supply, maintenance is an essential task for the nuclear unit.

"This is going to be a long, but needed outage – the first of its kind for Koeberg. Our staff are prepared and committed to make history by ensuring the success of this project. Nuclear safety is the paramount factor. We will progress the outage work diligently, making sure nuclear safety and safety of plant, personnel and public is top of mind," he said.

Refuelling, maintenance must be done

In a statement, Eskom explained that the refuelling and maintenance of the power station must be done to ensure that the nuclear unit is safe for use.

"Unlike other types of power stations, where fuel can be added to continue generating power, the fuel at a nuclear power station is sealed inside a reactor vessel, which is opened for refuelling every 15 to 18 months.

“This is also a time when the station will perform certain required inspections on equipment and perform more intrusive maintenance that cannot be performed when the unit is online. The rigorous maintenance, inspection and testing programmes are some of the critical activities that ensures that the plant remains safe and able to deliver this reliable level of performance,” Eskom said.



Koeberg power station life-extension project running late

10 Jan 2022



Extending Koeberg's lifespan

Furthermore, the power utility said the replacement of critical components at the nuclear power station will add to government's plan to extend the power station's lifespan.

“The replacement of the reactor pressure vessel head and steam generators has been identified by Eskom as a requirement for life extension.

“The successful replacement of these components is therefore an important element of the safety submission being prepared for submittal to the National Nuclear Regulator in mid-2022, in support of Koeberg's operation for 20 additional years,” Eskom said.

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