CONTENTS

3. From The General Manager
4. And The Lights Went On In Jozi!
6. Escom Arrives On the Johannesburg Scene
7-36. More about Us - Alberton, Boksburg, Brakpan
   Benoni, Springs, Bedfordview, Germisten, Kempton Park
   Nigel, KwaThema, Edenvale, Etwatwa, Tembisa, Simmerpan
   Rosheville, Bronkhorstspruit, Garankuwa, Cullinan, Temba, Soweto
   Midrand, Diepsloot, Sandton, Randfontein, Sebokeng
   Orange Farm, Vereeniging
38. Interesting Facts about Eskom Centre
40. Eskom in the News
42. Where we are Today
43. Acknowledgements
What a wonderful privilege and honour it is to work for a great company like Eskom during such a wonderful time in the company’s history! Ninety years is a grand old age for any human, but Eskom just seems to rejuvenate itself with every year that goes past.

Reading through the history of Eskom, I was in awe of the many great people who went before us. They built this company with grit and determination, with only one objective in mind: to bring electricity, and light, to the people of South Africa, for the good of South Africa.

Throughout the history one aspect is extremely clear: Johannesburg, and what is today the Gauteng province, has always been the economic hub of the country, responsible for 30% of the GDP, but the question remains whether it would have happened if Eskom was not the hub of the electricity supply in Johannesburg and South Africa. Without Eskom all mining and industrial activities would have suffered or died, because you need electricity, and lots of it, for progress and growth. Our contribution as Gauteng Operating Unit to the province’s economy has been remarkable. We have changed the lives of thousands of people for the better, and we have only just begun! If you take into consideration that Gauteng is the economic hub of South Africa, it is clear that the Gauteng Operating Unit’s contribution does not end at the borders of Gauteng, but that we have a considerable contribution to make in stimulating the whole country’s economy.

To this end we are continually upgrading and improving our networks in order to give our customers even better service and supply quality. In alignment with other key infrastructure developments in the province, the many townships in the operating unit are not left behind. We will continue to build and improve our networks in various towns, corridors and strategic hubs. These upliftment programmes will improve the lives of our community.

The people of Eskom’s Gauteng Operating Unit today epitomises the new Eskom. We have endured various restructurings, but we have prevailed and today we are a vibrant, diverse and competent group of people who carry the Eskom flag high and with pride, caring and integrity. Because our employees mean so much to us, it is important to us to keep them all close to our hearts, where we can keep them safe. Our Zero Harm campaign is driven hard, but it is our way of showing that we care for our people, and want them to stay safe and return to their families every day without any harm.

I have no doubt in my mind that the new Gauteng Operating Unit will always be on the forefront of everything new and exciting in Eskom and the rest of the country; the trendsetters for the generations to come. We vow to build on the examples set by them before us, and that we will take the Gauteng Operating Unit, and Eskom, to the next level by redefining our performance in everything we do into a performance worthy of one of the five top utilities in the world.

I am proud to endorse the Gauteng Operating Unit, and would like to assure Eskom that we would continue to serve the company with loyalty and hard work.
When you see the word “Johannesburg”, you always associate it with progress; with the hub of the country; the “City of Gold.” It is the place, so they say, where dreams come true, where there is life, laughter and love. By day it is a busy metropolis, and at night the skies light up with lights - all made possible by that one essential ingredient: electricity.

The Gauteng Operating Unit today plays a huge role in providing that electricity, and they can be proud to say that Eskom has been around in Gauteng, and its various guises down history, right from the beginning. Let us take a walk down Johannesburg’s, and Eskom’s, memory lane:

The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 led to Johannesburg installing its first electric lighting plant in 1889. This electrical power was generated by gas engines. An electricity reticulation system followed in 1891.

In 1889, the company Siemens & Halske was granted the concession to supply electricity to Johannesburg and Pretoria. This company did not supply power until it also obtained a concession to transmit electricity to the mines of the Witwatersrand in 1894. This concession was ceded to The Rand Central Electric Works Ltd a year later. The Rand Central Electric Works Ltd proceeded to erect the first commercial supply undertaking at a site later to be known as Brakpan. Power from The Rand Central Electric Works Ltd was first generated in May 1897.

When mining companies began pumping water from deep level shafts, they realised that the power generated by small lighting plants was inadequate. They joined forces to build larger “central” power stations to supplement existing supplies of electricity. The Simmer and Jack mines were awarded the rights, in 1897, to supply electricity to five nearby mines owned by Consolidated Goldfields Group. A subsidiary company, the General Electric Power Company Ltd, was established to
The notion of a central electricity undertaking gained the support of businessmen, engineers and others...

deal with this concession, a year later in 1898. The General Electric Power Company Ltd commissioned a power station at Driehoek (near Germiston) that first supplied power in 1898. The use of electricity by the mining companies had been restricted to illuminating work areas and driving small equipment. However, as the exploitation of gold deposits became more complicated, the power requirements of the mining companies increased. As the gold-mining industry recovered from the effects of the Anglo-Boer War, an adequate supply of cheap power became essential.

The notion of a central electricity undertaking gained the support of businessmen, engineers and others. This culminated in the establishment of the Victoria Falls Power Company Limited (VFP) on 17 October 1906. This company was registered in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

The VFP intended harnessing the power of the Victoria Falls to generate the electricity requirements of the expanding industries of the Witwatersrand and Southern Rhodesia.

For technical and financial reasons this idea was abandoned. Three years after the establishment of the VFP, it was renamed the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company Limited. The renamed company was still known as the VFP and based its entire operation on the exploitation of the coal deposits in the Transvaal Colony. Shortly after the Anglo-Boer War, expert opinion recommended that large centralised power stations would supply more reliable and cheaper electrical power than small dedicated power stations.

The VFP bought out The Rand Central Electric Works Ltd and the General Electric Power Co Ltd in 1906. A subsidiary company, the Rand Mines Power Supply Company, was formed by the VFP in 1908. This company was to supply electricity and compressed air to the Rand Mines Group and the Herbert Eckstein Group.

By 1915, four VFP thermal power stations, Brakpan, Simmerpan, Rosherville and Vereeniging, collectively had a total installed capacity of more than 160 megawatts. A system control centre was established at Simmerpan. This has grown to be the national control centre which directs Eskom's entire transmission network today. The rapid expansion of the VFP earned it the status of the largest power supply undertaking in the British Empire at one stage. The VFP also pioneered long-distance transmission of high-voltage electricity under the severe climatic conditions of the Witwatersrand.

The Power Act introduced on 28 May 1910 by the Transvaal Colonial Government, limited the future existence of the VFP. The Act authorised the operational expansion of the VFP, but provided for the State's expropriation of the company, or any other electricity undertaking, after a period of 35 years. The State viewed the provision of electricity as a public service to be placed under its authority.
ESCOM ARRIVES ON THE JOHANNESBURG SCENE

The Government Gazette of 6 March 1923 announced the establishment of The Electricity Supply Commission (Escom), effective from 1 March 1923. Dr Hendrik Johannes van der Bijl, a leading research scientist appointed by the Smuts government as a “Technical Advisor on Industrial Development to the Department of Mines and Industries”, was appointed the first Chairman of Escom. The Commission was made responsible for establishing and maintaining electricity supply undertakings on a regional basis. Electricity was to be supplied efficiently, cheaply and abundantly to government departments, railways and harbours, local authorities and industry. The Commission met for the first time on 20 March 1923 in Cape Town. The Commission’s headquarters opened in Johannesburg on 1 May 1923 on the first storey of Hoffman’s Buildings. The headquarters moved to Electricity House in 1924.

In 1937, Escom moved to its new head office building in Johannesburg, Escom House. It was an outstanding landmark in the city of Johannesburg. The fact that it was the highest building in the Union of South Africa was merely incidental, as it was not designed with that intention. The chairman of the commission conceived a building with every office as an “outside” office receiving direct sunlight. To achieve this it was necessary to follow a design, which also ensured that, although the building rose to a height of 236 feet, the three streets bounding it received an ample amount of light. The twenty-one storeys of Escom House, including the tower, were “stepped-back” in several stages, thereby introducing a new and pleasing style of architecture to South Africa.

This marked a departure from the edifices built mainly to ensure the maximum space to let, with no regard to other considerations. Escom House contained over 280 well-lit and temperature controlled offices, three well-lit boardrooms, a large exhibition hall, lecture theatre, two banking halls, ladies’ rest rooms, lunch and recreation rooms for the staff, a chemical laboratory, and a parking garage for all of 60 cars in the basement! With the Royal visit in 1947, Escom House was decorated with flags and banners to mark the occasion.

Escom House contained over 280 well-lit and temperature controlled offices, three boardrooms, a large exhibition hall...

By 1958 Escom House was bursting at the seams, and the company relocated to Escom Centre in what is now called Braamfontein. It was built in 1955 to a height of 61 metres, and at that stage it was the only building that could be seen from the patch of veld that is now called Kensington B. In later years the Harrison and Randkom buildings also formed part of the Escom campus in Braamfontein.

In 1977 it was time to move again. Escom moved to a new Head Office building, Megawatt Park, in Sandton, is a showpiece that emphasises Escom’s leading role in the development of South Africa and its people. Because of the abundance of indoor plants, the press was quick to name Megawatt Park “The Hanging Gardens of Babylon.” Escom Centre remained home to the employees of the Rand and OFS Undertaking.

Following the appointment of Dr John B Maree as Chairman in 1985, Escom was restructured to meet the electricity demands of a changing South Africa. The Electricity Supply Commission (Escom) was replaced by an Electricity Council
(appointed by Government) with a Management Board appointed by the Electricity Council. In 1987, Escom was renamed Eskom. It was at this stage that Distribution was split into regions, with Southern and Western Transvaal Regions situated in Eskom Centre, and Central Region in the Randkom Building.

In 1992 it was time to pack the boxes again. Distribution split into five Distributors, with Johannesburg Distributor remaining in Eskom Centre. As we all know, after 1994 the Distributors became regions, with Gauteng firmly staying in Johannesburg and Braamfontein. And now we are provinces....
Every little bit helps.

It doesn't matter who you are, where you live or what you earn. You have the power to make a big difference. All you have to do is to switch off what you don’t need. To find out more, visit www.49m.co.za
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**ESKOM BUSINESS IN GAUTENG**

- **Demand**
  - 11 000MW of 36 600MW national
  - 30% of national demand
  - 3x municipality power stations deliver on average 350mw

- **Network**
  - 27 500km of a total 395 000km of lines
  - 35 transmission substations
  - 562 distribution substations

- **Customers**
  - 757 000 customers in Gauteng
  - Residential 98% of customers
  - Municipalities 0.02% of customers
  - 1.98% is industrial, mining, commercial and agricultural customers

- **Business locations**
  - Ekurhuleni
  - Randfontein
  - Johannesburg
  - Soweto
  - Vereeniging
  - Sunninghill
  - Tshwane

- **Revenues**
  - R23.7 billion
  - Municipalities 59%
  - Industrial 16%
  - Residential 8%
  - Mining 7%
  - Commercial 7%
  - Other 3%

- **Staff**
  - Average of 2946

- **Demand-side management**
  - average of 300 m spent
  - average of 13 m CFLs installed
  - average of 79 k Solar Water Heaters funded

- **Capital expansion and refurbishment**
  - Distribution average of 1.6 bn
  - Transmission average of 2.4 bn

- **Electrification**
  - Inception to date 437 435 connection
  - 8 233 connection 2010/11 at R60 million
  - 13 319 planned for 2011/12 at R61 million

- **Network**
  - Ekurhuleni
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Alberton

Alberton started on the farm Elandsfontein by its 13-year-old owner, Johannes Petrus Meyer. After the death of his wife in 1870, he started a general dealer’s store and later built his mansion (still standing today) in 1890. This mansion was never destroyed and was miraculously left untouched during the war. It can still be seen from the highway. Jan’s brother Johan Georg (Org) Meyer took over the farm after Jan’s death. A General Alberts purchased a part of the farm Elandsfontein from Org and his plan was to split it up into erven and sell it. General Alberts decided on the name Alberton.

The first company in Alberton was CJ Fuchs (Pty) Limited (est. 1918) and is still doing business in Alberton as Fuchsware. Alberton’s first street lights were also installed in 1918.

Brakpan

Brakpan was first named in 1886, and boasts the very first power station, built in 1897 by the Rand Central Electric Works at Brakpan Dam. Brakpan Power Station was the first power station to be built by the Victoria Falls Power Company (the VFP) and was brought into operation in September 1908. It was built alongside the earlier station, the Rand Central Electric Works (RCEW), which had been taken over by the VFP in 1907. Brakpan Power Station was sometimes referred to as the “new” Brakpan Station. In more recent literature, the RCEW is often incorrectly referred to as the “old” Brakpan Power Station, but it was not known as such in earlier literature.

Brakpan Power Station, as well as Simmerpan’s, which was commissioned in 1909, was originally planned as an interim measure pending power being brought from the Victoria Falls. It was realised that this scheme would be uneconomic, and the Victoria Falls Power Company was changed to the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company in 1909, but still known as the VFP. The design and layout of the first power stations of the VFP were largely due to Professor Dr Klingenberg of Berlin, who was a director and Engineer-in-Chief of the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft (the AEG).

The operating and maintenance staff was drawn mainly from Britain and was under the direction of Dr Bernard Price. Dr Price was a member of the British firm Merz and McLellan from 1901 until he came to South Africa in 1909, where he became Chief Engineer and later General Manager, of the VFP. Two major technical problems were the burning of low-grade coal and the operation of a power system in an area of severe and frequent lightning storms. The VFP was at one time the largest Undertaking of its kind in the British Empire and it provided the basic system from which the present Eskom system was developed.

Boksburg

As early as 1903, Boksburg received electricity from the first power station built at Brakpan Dam. In October 1904 Boksburg Town Council entered into a four-year contract with a private company, E.H.Gellander &Company Ltd, to provide direct current power for street lights and some houses. At the start, there were 117 electricity consumers in Boksburg, but by September 1905, demand was so high that the Council requested Gellander to add an additional 80 kilowatt generating plant. Then in 1908, the Victoria Falls & Transvaal Power Company entered the picture. They enlarged the old Rand Central Electric Works at Brakpan, built a new power station at Simmerpan, Germiston and built a 40,000 volt transmission line from Brakpan to Germiston via Apex, with feeder lines running to Boksburg town and to the Cinderella Deep and other mines along the route. And so for a long time, the East Rand had power to read at night and to watch films at cinemas.

Three of the original VFP pylons from 1908 are still standing next to Checkers Hyper in Cinderella, on the old VFP (now Eskom) power servitude from Brakpan to Germiston.
LET THERE BE LIGHT...
Benoni

The City of Benoni forms part of Greater Johannesburg. It became a city in 1981 and owes its existence to gold-mining and industry. The first inhabitants of this area were Stone Age hunters-gatherers who roamed here some 50 000 years ago.

Remnants of their weapons were found in the Rynfield area and near Cranbourne Station many years ago. Benoni’s inauspicious beginnings were in 1881 when then surveyor general, Johan Rissik, found it difficult to assign title deeds to all unclaimed state property. He named the area ‘Benoni’ (Son of my sorrows) after the name given by Rachel to her son in the biblical book of Genesis.

After gold was discovered, mines were established in the area, and during the miners’ revolt of 1922, Benoni was used as one of the headquarters of the miners and much fighting took place in and around the area.

Springs

Springs was founded as a coal and gold mining town in 1904, but its history can be traced back to the second half of the 19th century.

From about 1840 farmers moved into the area and declared farms for themselves, especially after the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (South African Republic, later Transvaal) became an independent republic with the signing of the Sand River Convention in 1852. These initial farms were large, but the measurements of the borders were inaccurate and later, when the correct borders of the farms had to be documented, there were several extra or odd pieces of land that did not belong to any farm. These odd pieces of land then became state property. Such an odd piece existed between three neighbouring farms on the Witwatersrand, namely Geduld (meaning ‘patience’), De Rietfontein (‘the reed fountain’) and Brakpan (literally, ‘small, brackish lake’). The 685 ha odd piece was given the name ‘The Springs’ by the land surveyor James Brooks, probably because of all the fountains on the land. Another story is that he wanted to name it after himself, but because his name (Brooks) resembled the Afrikaans word ‘broek’ (trousers) so closely, he feared that the Afrikaans farmers in the area would mock it.

On 16 September 1884 the official map of The Springs was registered in Pretoria, the Republic’s capital. Initially, the land’s value was equal to R200. But the discovery of coal and gold and its subsequent mining increased the value considerably.

The coal discovered in The Springs was of a good quality and in 1888 the first contract was signed to mine coal there. In April 1904 The Springs was proclaimed a town called Springs.
**Daveyton**

Daveyton is one of the largest townships in South Africa, and was established in 1952 when 151,656 people were moved from Benoni, the old location of Etwatwa. Daveyton is affectionately known by the nickname Vutha or Tuka, due to it being the first black township to have access to electricity.

**Duduza**

Duduza, west of Nigel, was established in 1964 when it was resettled from Charterston because the apartheid government considered it to be too close to the white area. The name Duduza means “to comfort”; this was to comfort the people forcibly removed from there Charterston, also known as Beirut. Duduza was also infamously the place where the first “neck-lacing” took place.
DANGER
GEVAAR
INGOZI

KEEP OUR COUNTRY POWER-FUL!

The movement for legal power use is growing. It's time to take back the power.
Have your electricity supply audited to ensure that it is legal and safe.
But don't stop there. Ask your fellow farmers, business partners and suppliers
to do the same. Let's unite to stop electricity theft. Operation Khanyisa.
The power is in your hands.

SMS 32211

Report electricity theft anonymously. Send a detailed SMS to Primedia
Crime Line. (R1/SMS)
**Bedfordview**

The area initially belonged to the Government, until it was granted to the Van der Linden family in 1867. Until the discovery of gold, it stayed in the family for many years, even though it was subdivided. When mining efforts for gold proved futile, chunks of land became available for agriculture, after which it evolved into the thriving business community it is today.

**Germiston**

Gold gave Germiston its beginning in 1886. It became a municipality in 1903 and a city in 1950. Pioneering honours go to August Simmer and John Jack, who came in 1886 to exploit the gold. John Jack called the place Germiston after his childhood home near Glasgow.

Many other mining ventures followed and Germiston’s growth was generated by supplementary industrial requirements. These, in turn, attracted supporting commerce and increasing population. Because of Germiston’s unique geographic position, situated at the center of the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging axis, Germiston became the the focus of the country’s most extensive railway network. Today some 200 000 rail passengers and 170 000 metric tons of goods pass through the City’s station each month.

Germiston has the most important markets on its doorsteps, raw materials are readily obtained and coal and steel are factors of immense economic importance. Industry has long since overtaken gold mining. However, Germiston is still the home of the world’s largest gold refinery. The City is also the home of more than 700 factories, some of them the biggest in the country.

**Kempton Park**

It was a railroad that stimulated the birth of Kempton Park. Prior to the Great Trek of the 1830’s, the area on which Kempton Park now stands was known only to hunters and nomad cattle farmers. The first seeds of the Kempton Park story were planted when, on 25 October 1859, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (Z.A.R.) issued a title deed for part of the farm Zuurfontein on which Kempton Park would develop many years later.

The discovery of gold in 1886 some 50 kilometers west of Zuurfontein stimulated, amongst others, the building of a railway line, which would serve as a link between the Transvaal gold fields and the east coast. On 25 June 1890, the Z.A.R. government granted a concession for the building of a railway line from Pretoria, bypassing Johannesburg on the east and directed to the Vaal River by the shortest route. The main line cut directly through the farm Zuurfontein, thus forging another link in the destiny of the yet unborn township of Kempton Park.

One of the stations established was at Zuurfontein. Zuurfontein station soon became a gathering place for resident farmers in the area where they collected their supplies.

The next major development determining the future of Kempton Park was the building of the dynamite factory at Modderfontein. In conjunction with the largest dynamite manufacturer in Europe, the German-owned Nobel Trust, a new company was formed in 1894, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Fabrieken voor Ontplofbare Stoffen Beperkt. In 1895 building of an explosives factory at Modderfontein commenced. The Zuid Afriakaansche Fabrieken voor Ontplofbare Stoffen Beperkt was a company formed expressly to supply dynamite to the mines. It was the brainchild of Paul Kruger, President of the South African Republic, who also opened the factory.
The discovery of gold in 1886
Nigel

In the year 1882 a farmer, Petrus Johannes Marais (nicknamed Oom Lang Piet), who owned the farm Varkensfontein in the Heidelberg district, made an agreement with a prospector named Johnstone allowing him to prospect for gold on the farm Varkensfontein. Mr. Johnstone’s prospecting operations continued for a considerable time shrouded in secrecy. Then one day a stranger turned up at Oom Lang Piet’s home and made an offer to buy the farm.

At the time of the offer Oom Lang Piet was by chance busy reading “The Fortunes of Nigel” by Sir Walter Scott, a story about a young man who was the victim of a dishonest intrigue, but who eventually achieved his goal in life. The stranger’s visit immediately aroused Mr. Marais’s suspicions to the extent that he decided to visit his farm himself. Once at the farm he found that his suspicions were well founded.

With the experiences of Nigel, the character in the novel in mind, he determined not to allow himself to be cheated by cunning fortune seekers and at once set about to establish his own company. In July 1888, two years after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, he achieved his goal. Marais attributed his luck to the novel he had been reading and, therefore, called his company Nigel. In this way, the town of Nigel came into being.

Edenvale

Edenvale experienced a building boom from the 1940s, when water and electricity became available. Building societies granted loans for housing, which greatly assisted in the rapid development of the Edenvale municipal area.

Etwatwa

After people were removed from Etwatwa to Daveyton, the township did not cease to exist. (The name means “gunfire”, the shots that were fired during the apartheid era.) People here are very poor, without running water, but they have electricity. It is therefore not unusual to see the shacks with satellite dishes outside and big-screen TVs inside.

Tembisa

Tembisa is a large township situated to the north of Kempton Park on the East Rand, Gauteng, South Africa. It was established in 1957 when Africans were resettled from Alexandra and other areas in Edenvale, Kempton Park, Midrand and Germiston. Tembisa is also the largest city in South Africa whose name is not of Afrikaans or English origin.

The township was founded in 1957. After the Afrikaner-dominated National Party gained power in 1948 and began to implement apartheid, the pace of forced removals and the creation of townships outside legally-designated white areas increased. The Johannesburg council established new townships for black Africans evicted from the city’s freehold areas.

KwaThema

KwaThema is a township south-west of Springs on the East Rand. It was established in 1951 when Africans were resettled from Payneville because it was considered by the apartheid government to be too close to a white town. The new township’s layout was designed along modernist principles and became a model for many subsequent townships, although the envisaged social facilities were not implemented. The typical South African township house, the 51/9, was one of the plans developed for KwaThema. A black local authority with municipal status was established in 1984. In 1985 KwaThema experienced violent unrest and right-wing vigilante activity.
In 1956 townships were laid out for particular ethnic groups as part of the state’s strategy to sift black Africans into groupings that would later form the building blocks of the so-called “independent homelands. Tembisa, a Nguni name meaning Promise or Hope, just like many other black townships, had its fair share of political turmoil. This township is the single largest in the Southern Hemisphere, 17 kilometres from the Johannesburg International Airport and 38 kilometres from Pretoria.
Simmerpan

The Simmerpan Power Station was the second power station to start generating electrical power under the banner of the Victoria Falls Power Company Limited (VFP) or its subsidiary Rand Mines Power Supply Company (RMPS). The other power station was Brakpan. The Victoria Falls Power Company Limited would change its name to the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company Limited in 1909. Both VFP and RMPS would supply power under separate licences granted by the government in terms of the Transvaal Power Act of 1910.
The power station started generating power in 1909. It, like the Brakpan Power Station, was built to supply the gold mines of the Witwatersrand with electricity. This was at a time when South Africa’s mining industry was expanding rapidly and that expansion depended on the supply of electricity.

The Simmerpan Power Station was built halfway between Germiston and Rosherville on the banks of the Victoria Lake.

The power station developed a rich history and tradition that went way beyond just generating and delivering electrical power. It, like other power stations started in the same era, had many personalities and many of the people that worked there grew to see it as more than just a place of work. The power station was part of a larger community of VFP operations built at the same location. There was an electrical test department, stores, the distribution department, and the system control room that controlled outputs from Simmerpan, Vereeniging, Brakpan, and Rosherville Power Station. The compressed air system to the mines was also controlled from this room. Simmerpan Power Station was closed down in 1957, 48 years after being opened.

In the years that followed the establishment of the Simmerpan Power Station, the advantage of using electricity was evident to the consumers due to its cheapness, convenience, and reliability. This increased demand lead to further expansions.

Shortly after the First World War started (1914), two 11 MW generators were added to the Simmerpan Power Station. This increased the potential output of the station to 40 MW. The outbreak of the Second World War did not have the same effect as the First World War on the mining sector. Although there were a large number of personnel on active service, this was counterbalanced by the large industrial expansion caused by the need for war supplies and the end of imports.

On 16 June 1948 a formal agreement was signed between Escom and the VFP. The VFP sold its shares in RMPS, transferred all staff, assets, and licenses for the price of £14.5 million (R29 million at the prevailing rate of exchange) to Escom. This was the biggest transaction in the history of South Africa up to then. Simmerpan now belonged to Escom. The area that Escom had just gained became known as the Greater Rand Undertaking. This would change twice, and eventually be called the Rand and Orange Free State Undertaking.

In 1957, the Simmerpan Power Station closed down after 48 years of service. One of the reasons for the closure was the cost of bringing coal from the mines. Another was the start of the national grid that had no place for the power station. When Simmerpan closed, most of the workers remained loyal to Eskom and transferred to work in other power stations.

The original building is still standing with part of it used for offices and the rest used as a storeroom. It is now known as the Switchgear building.

In 1968, a new control centre was built on the same site at Simmerpan.
His life will never be the same

His parents opted for what they thought was the easiest way out...
Connecting illegally

Report illegal connections on 0800 11 27 22

Please report any cable theft and illegal connections to the Eskom toll-free crime line on: 0800 11 27 22.
This is a call for change; do your part and save a life today.
**Rosherville**

The Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company Limited (VFP) established workshops at Rosherville because of its centralised location. At the workshops, crews repaired heavy machinery used at power stations. The workshops were equipped with machine tools that could handle virtually any piece of equipment that the VFP or Escom owned. Escom (as it was then known) took over the assets of the VFP in 1948. The workshops became known as Central Maintenance Services (CMS).

During World War 2, German attacks in the Atlantic led to a sharp decrease in shipping. This caused the South African government to spend millions developing local steel, chemical and textile industries. South African industry now focused on production for the war effort. The South African Iron and Steel Industrial Corporation (Iscor) produced steel to manufacture armoured cars, shells, bombs, guns and tanks.

Railway workshops turned out munitions and heavy armaments. Workshops in the mining sector produced shells, howitzers and mortars. Similarly, workers at Rosherville workshops produced weaponry for the war effort.

After World War 2 Escom’s repair needs grew. Rosherville workshops expanded to accommodate those needs. From Rosherville workshops, specialised crews were sent to power stations to overhaul turbo-generators, and to repair large transformers at substations. The CMS owned machine tools capable of repairing the largest 600 MW turbine rotors Eskom possessed. Its balancing machine could handle the largest and heaviest rotating pieces of equipment in South Africa.

A fleet of heavy vehicles was established to transport heavy equipment to and from sites where it was used. When Rosherville Power Station was closed in 1966, the site was further developed into a large workshop, garage and stores complex.

When Eskom established Eskom Enterprises in 1999, Rosherville workshops became known as Rotek Engineering, a division of Rotek Industries, which is a member of the Eskom Group. The workshops are now known as Heritage Office Park, home to many top companies. As a natural progression, the recreation hall has been refurbished to bring you the Heritage Conference Centre.
Bronkhorstspruit

Bronkhorstspruit is a small farming town 50km east of Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa along the N4 highway towards Witbank. It lies on the border between the Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces. Cultura Park, a suburb of Bronkhorstspruit, hosts the largest Buddhist temple in the Southern Hemisphere, which houses the South African headquarters of the Humanistic Buddhist order. The latter does a lot of community work, celebrates the Chinese New Year and is open to the public, who can book in for weekend-long retreats.

In 1858, a group of Voortrekkers settled in the Bronkhorstspruit creek, which was originally called Kalkoenkransrivier (‘Turkey Cliff River’). In June 1897, the South African Republic gave its approval for the town, then already named Bronkhorstspruit by locals after the Bronkhorstspruit River.

In 1880 it was the scene of the action at Bronkhorstspruit, an important event in the early days of the First Boer War. There is disagreement about where the town got its name from. Some believe it was named after the farmer JG Bronkhorst, while others say that it was named after the plant, bronkors (Afrikaans for watercress), that grew in the region of the creek.

Ga-Rankuwa

Developed in accordance with the Physical Planning Act of 1967, Ga-Rankuwa was intended to accommodate black labourers and their families who were meant to provide cheap labour to the neighbouring Rosslyn industrial area, which is 10 km away.

At the time, Ga-Rankuwa fell under a “native reserve” which was demarcated to be part of Bophuthatswana; this meant that Ga-Rankuwa would then be reserved for Setswana-speaking people who were to be forcibly removed from Lady Selbourne and Claremont, which were proclaimed “White areas”, and later from Atteridgeville. Accounts on the origin of this township’s name are interestingly conflicting and there seem to be a lack of documentary proof to support any of the claims. One claim is: ‘Rankuwa means “we are taken”. When they (the displaced black people) arrived in the area, which was infertile and unsuited for farming, they named it Ga-Rankuwa which means “We are not taken”. This can be taken to be factually incorrect, particularly because the translations are wrong.
Another claim is: “The area was named after a Bakgatla headman, Rankuwa Boikhotso.” This claim may be refuted on the account that the land on which Ga-Rankuwa was established is believed to have been owned by Bakwena Ba Magopa. This then gives rise to the question: why would a Bakwena area be named after a Bakgatla Ntona (headman)? According to Tshwane Tourism, the name Ga-Rankuwa is derived from sheep farming which once took place in the area. “The name, Ga-rankuwa, (sic) or place of the sheep farmer is derived from the word “Nku” meaning sheep. Modern times have seen the area becoming mainly residential and sheep are nowhere to be seen.”

The other claim, which is more believable, is that the area was named after a land owner close to Lucas Mangope with the surname: Nkuwa. This claim is attributed to oral history. It is believed that Mr Nkuwa (or RaNkuwa in the Setswana language) owned some of the land on which this township was established.
Cullinan

The Cullinan Diamond Mine owes its historic fame to the largest diamond ever uncovered - the Cullinan Diamond.

An influential building contractor named Thomas Cullinan bought the Elandsfontein farm that housed the Cullinan Diamond Mine in 1903. Less than two years later, a rough diamond was found nine metres down and protruding from the sidewall of the pit measuring a staggering 3,106.75 carats. The Cullinan Diamond was established as the greatest diamond ever found, the jewel was named after the mine’s owner and sold to the South African government, who presented it to King Edward VII on his 66th birthday. The largest diamond the world has ever known was cut into nine major stones and approximately 96 smaller diamonds.

The main piece of the polished gem, named Cullinan I, or The Great Star of Africa, was the biggest of the collection and measured an astonishing 530.2 carats. The diamond remained the largest until the discovery of the 545.67 carat Golden Jubilee Diamond found in 1985 in the Cullinan Diamond Mine. The Great Star of Africa is displayed in the head of England’s royal sceptre, while the Lesser Star of Africa, or Cullinan II, measuring 317.4 carats, forms part of the British crown jewels’ Imperial State Crown. Both South African-mined diamonds are exhibited at the Tower of London.

The displaced inhabitants of Bezuïdenvoutsfarm - which was located near the Kekana Tribal Land - were dumped on an open field, without schools, churches, or any meaningful communal establishment. In order to create shelter for themselves, the people erected tents which they slept in. The tent village was then named “Sofasonke” (loosely translated: we will die in solidarity/together) by its inhabitants, perhaps to show unity and solidarity among themselves.

After some time living in tents, formal housing structures were built for the people of Sofasonke. Those who afforded moved into the newly-built houses and others started building houses for themselves. As the township was being transformed, the veld they were dumped on was turning into a decent residential area, the people of Sofasonke then renamed the township Temba (meaning ‘hope’ in IsiZulu - the township was now a place of hope).

In 1946 and 1947, more people were forcefully relocated to the area. Another group from Wallmannsthal was also relocated here in later years. The township was further developed and by 1960 it was considered the “only town developed in Tswanaland (Bophuthatswana)” with 250 housing units.

Temba

Just like most of diKasi tsa Pitori, Temba was started as a result of the apartheid government’s racial separatist policies. Starting as early as 1942, people were relocated from places which were earmarked as ‘white-areas’ in and around Pretoria to places, mostly farms, far away from the CBD. Temba was started on a farm called Bezuïdenvoutsfarm in 1942 when people forcefully removed from places such as Lady Selbourne, Orlando and Klipspruit were “dumped” by trucks on the farm.
In 1961, the apartheid government decided to create ‘homelands’ (or ‘Bantustans’, as the government sometimes referred to them) for African people to keep them away from what they called ‘White areas’. Among the homelands was Bophuthatswana, which was developed for the Setswana-speaking people of South Africa. Temba was demarcated to fall within the borders of Bophuthatswana, while the adjacent Hammanskraal remained within the borders of the Republic of South Africa. Temba struggled with its integration into democratic South Africa after the 1994 first democratic general elections; this was as a result of disagreements regarding demarcation. Apparently the Demarcation Board had cut through Temba, making some parts fall into other provinces while other parts fell into Gauteng.
Soweto

The history of African townships south west of Johannesburg that would later form Soweto was propelled by the increasing eviction of Africans by city and state authorities. Africans had been drawn to work on the gold mines that were established after 1886. From the start they were accommodated in separate areas on the outskirts of Johannesburg, such as Brickfields (Newtown). In 1904 British-controlled city authorities removed African and Indian residents of Brickfields to an “evacuation camp” at Klipspruit municipal sewage farm (not Kliptown, a separate township) outside the Johannesburg municipal boundary, following a reported outbreak of plague. Two further townships were laid out to the east and the west of Johannesburg in 1918. Townships to the south west of Johannesburg followed, starting with Pimville in 1934 (a renamed part of Klipspruit) and Orlando in 1935.

Industrialisation during World War I drew thousands of black workers to the Reef. They were also propelled by legislation that rendered many rural Black Africans landless. Informal settlements developed to meet the growing lack of housing. The Sofasonke squatter’s movement of James Mpanza in 1944 organised the occupation of vacant land in the area, at what became known as Masakeng (Orlando West). Partly as a result of Mpanza’s actions, the city council was forced to set up emergency camps in Orlando and Moroka, and later in Central Western Jabavu.

After the Afrikaner-dominated National Party gained power in 1948 and began to implement apartheid, the pace of forced removals and the creation of townships outside legally designated white areas increased. The Johannesburg council established new townships to the southwest for black Africans evicted from the city’s freehold areas of Martindale, Sophiatown, and Alexandra. Some townships were basic site and service plots (Tladi, Zondi, Dhlamini, Chiawelo, Senoane, 1954), while at Dube middle-class residents built their own houses. The first hostel to accommodate migrant workers evicted from the inner city in 1955 was built at Dube. The following year houses were built in the newly proclaimed townships of Meadowlands and Diepkloof.

In 1956 townships were laid out for particular ethnic groups as part of the state’s strategy to sort black Africans into groupings that would later form the building blocks of the so-called “independent homelands”. Spurred by a donation of R6 million to the state by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer in 1956 for housing in the area, Naledi, Mapetla, Tladi, Moletsane and Phiri were created to house Sotho- and Tswana-speakers. Zulu- and Xhosa-speakers were accommodated in Dhlamini, Senoane, Zola, Zondi, Jabulani, Emdeni and White City.
Chiawelo was established for Tsonga- and Venda-speaking residents. In 1963, the name Soweto (SOuth WEstern TOWnships) was officially adopted for the sprawling township that now occupied what had been the farms of Doornkop, Klipriviersoog, Diepkloof, Klipspruit and Vogelstruisfontein. Soweto came to the world’s attention on 16 June 1976 with the Soweto Uprising, when mass protests erupted over the government’s policy to enforce education in Afrikaans rather than English.

In response to the unrest, the apartheid state started providing electricity to more Soweto homes, yet phased out financial support for building additional housing. In 1992 Eskom took over the supply of electricity to individual customers in Soweto. The agreement was the result of arbitration action and the Soweto City Council concerning Soweto’s non-payment of their bulk electricity account to Eskom.
Midrand

Midrand was established as a municipality in 1981, but ceased to be an independent town in the restructuring of local government that followed the end of apartheid in 1994. It was incorporated in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality in 2000. Though no longer an independent town, the name Midrand is still on common use to denote the suburbs around the N1 highway north of the Jukskei River up to the border with City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Suburbs that are generally regarded as being in Midrand include among others: Country View, Carlswald, Crowthorne, Glen Austin, Halfway House, Halfway Gardens, Kyalami, Vorna Valley and Randjesfontein.

Midrand’s development has meant there is little break between the outskirts of Johannesburg and those of Pretoria, and the Gauteng Provincial Government envisages that, according to current growth trends, much of the province will be city by 2015.

Diepsloot

Diepsloot is a densely populated settlement made up of Government-subsidised housing, brick houses built by land owners and shacks. These shacks are built on whichever open piece of land. Some land owners charge rent to others to stay in a shack on their land. Diepsloot West Township is not far from the wealthy suburbs of Dainfern and Chartwell, and was established in 1995 as a transit camp for people who had been removed from Zevenfontein. Here 1 124 plots were made available. People were to stay in the transit camp until land became available. For many this camp became a permanent home.

Diepsloot is now home to about 150,000 people; many of them live in 3m-by-2m shacks assembled from scrap metal, wood, plastic and cardboard. Some families lack access to basic services such as running water, sewage and rubbish removal. All extensions except for extension 5 have tar roads, drainage and street lights. Members of the local council live in all extensions except extension 5. Extension 5 often gets flooded in the heavy summer rains as the water from the mall also runs down into their roads. Residents use paraffin stoves and coal for cooking, and candles for light. Some shacks have electricity and use a pre-paid meter, but this is becoming increasingly expensive and is used sparingly.

Sandton

The name ‘Sandton’ is derived from a combination of Sandown and Bryanston and in less than 30 years, Sandton has become the most significant business and financial district in South Africa.

When walking along the streets of “Africa’s richest square mile” surrounded by Manhattan-style skyscrapers, opulent houses, office towers, international and locally renowned brands, and exotic cars, it’s hard to believe that Sandton was merely sandy horse trails and grassy estates just 50 years ago.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,000 years ago</td>
<td>Stone Age hunters walked the Sandton plains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 years ago</td>
<td>Tribesmen watered their herds at Sandton’s streams and springs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 years ago</td>
<td>The tribesmen ran an iron smelting economy in Sandton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 years ago</td>
<td>The richest gold field on earth was discovered in Sandton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 years ago</td>
<td>Sandton was home to a world of rich estates and sandy horse trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 years ago</td>
<td>Sandton City Shopping Centre was built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today</td>
<td>Sandton is the most opulent area in Johannesburg and is the most important business and financial district in the country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Randfontein

Randfontein is a gold-mining town in western Gauteng, 45 km west of Johannesburg. With the Witwatersrand gold rush in full swing, mining financier JB Robinson bought the farm Randfontein and, in 1889, floated the Randfontein Estates Gold Mining Company. The town was established in 1890 to serve the new mine and was administered by Krugersdorp until it became a municipality in 1929. As of 2007, Randfontein has a population of 128,731, which incorporates Mohlakeng and Toekomsrus. Randfontein Estates had the largest stamp mill in the world, with 600 stamps.

Sebokeng

Sebokeng, which literally means “gathering place” in Sesotho, was established by the then apartheid government in 1965 when 18,772 houses were erected. In September 1984 there were violent clashes between the South African security forces and the residents of Sebokeng, who were boycotting rent and service tariffs. The cessation of fighting in 1994 allowed citizens to begin forming a stable community.

The township is divided into a number of zones ranging from Zone 1 to Zone 21. After South Africa’s democratic elections in 1994, the number of middle-class black South Africans, or ‘black diamonds’, in this township has risen dramatically, with Zones such as Zone 6, 10 and 14 consisting of the largest number of black middle-class citizens and homes with a higher property value than traditional Apartheid ‘matchbox houses’ (four-roomed houses erected during the township’s establishment).

The township is predominantly black, but there has been an influx of people of other racial groups seeking to live there.

Orange Farm

Orange Farm (Farma) is a township located approximately 45 km from Johannesburg. It is one of the youngest informal settlements in South Africa, with the original inhabitants, laid-off farm workers, taking up residency in 1988. Support for the population came slowly, mostly from people who were tenants at the great township of Soweto.

The settlement now includes a modern library, a few paved roads, permanent housing for some, electricity in places, a clinic, an information centre with internet access and a multi-purpose community centre. However, these improvements come with financial costs, which most of the citizens living in Orange Farm cannot afford. The ongoing privatisation which Orange Farm has been subjected to has also drawn much criticism from social justice and human rights groups. Most people are still living in shacks. The streets are full of dongas and when it rains the streets become muddy, making it impossible for cars to pass. The instalment of pre-paid water meters has been criticised for denying access to clean drinking water for much of the population of Orange Farm.
Vereeniging

With the persuasion of Sammy Marks (who pointed out the advantages of siting a power station next to the coal fields), the Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company Limited decided to erect a power station on the banks of the Vaal River at Vereeniging. The power station was completed in 1912 and was equipped with two 9.6 MW sets, with a further two 12 MW sets being added in 1913. The electricity generated was transmitted 36 miles on a high voltage line to the Witwatersrand at a voltage of 80 kV. Coal was supplied from the nearby Cornelia Colliery at Viljoensdrift.

Electricity for 107 houses in the “more affluent suburb of Market Street” was only connected to the VFP power supply main in 1921. Between 1923 and 1933 the Vereeniging Power Station was extended four times, giving it a generating capacity of 140MW and making it one of the largest stations in the British Empire at that time. The power station was hailed as a major success for the growing industries around Vereeniging, the only problem occurring during a stormy night in December 1925, when one of the plant’s 10MW generators suffered a mechanical failure. The generator was ripped apart, and the core of the machine tore through the roof and landed 2 miles away on the Free State side of the Vaal River.

The increase in the price of gold in 1933 led to the expansion of the mines and a rapid growth in the demand for electricity, which stretched the VFP to the limits of its capacity.

In 1934, the Vereeniging Estates induced the VFP to build a second power station in Vereeniging by allowing it land on the Klip River to become the site of the Klip Power Station. The site was adjacent to a new colliery shaft of the old Springfield Colliery (owned by Amalgamated Collieries, a subsidiary of Vereeniging Estates) from which coal could be mechanically fed directly into the bunkers. Escom (founded in 1923) was to finance and own the Klip Power Station and the VFP was to operate it as part of its own network. The first generator was started up in March 1936 and the last was put into service in July 1940. With a total of 424 MW of installed plant, the Klip Power Station was the largest steam power station in the Southern Hemisphere, consuming up to 4.5 ton of coal per minute. It was also the first station in Escom to have cooling towers which were more efficient and required much less make-up water than the spray ponds or surface cooling ponds used at other power stations as they evaporated only one per cent of the total water flow.
The station was in operation for fifty years, being closed down in March 1986.

Despite the erection of the new Klip Power Station, another extension had to be built onto Vereeniging Power Station in the late 1930s. In 1936, the station was connected to the Witwatersrand system by means of 80,000 volt lines, those being lines of the highest voltage in the southern hemisphere at that time. By 1938, Escom with the VFP decided to build Vereeniging’s third power station (Vaal) next to the Vereeniging Power Station, on the opposite bank of the Vaal River in the Orange Free State. World War II caused the commissioning of the Vaal Power Station to be delayed and it finally came on stream in 1945. It was the first station in Escom to have cooling towers which were more efficient and required much less make-up water than the spray ponds or surface cooling ponds used at other power stations as they evaporated only one per cent of the total water flow. The station was closed down in March 1986.

In 1948, Escom bought out the VFP and acquired Brakpan, Simmerpan, Rosherville, and Vereeniging Power Stations and on 1 January 1949, all the VFP employees become employees of Escom. It was during this period that Escom’s founding Chairman, Dr H J van der Bijl who was responsible for the founding of Vanderbijlpark and the giant Iscor (now Mittal) works, died in December 1948. During the 1950’s, the demand for power from the industrial growth in the Vaal Triangle (Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark and Sasolburg) soared. Escom added boilers and generators to six stations, including Vereeniging Power Station. The post war development had made Vereeniging the major centre for steel and engineering industries and earned it the name, “Power House” of the Transvaal.
Eskom Centre still personifies Eskom in Braamfontein, although the area around it has changed so much. Some of the older hands recollect the following: The design of Eskom Centre is such that it is earthquake-proof. Something that is not common knowledge is that there is a river running underneath Eskom Centre, and that a set of pumps is running continuously to maintain the water levels so that the building does not flood. In 2003 it did happen, however, and the archives in Basement 1 were flooded.

In earlier years Eskom did not use outside contractors, but used in-house artisans for plumbing and maintenance. Up to 1990 Eskom Centre still had its own fire team, called the Real McCoy, under the leadership of Charlie Fleming. And a good thing too, because there was a fire on the 11th floor in 1983. Eskom Centre had regular fire drills that were run with military precision. There were red phones in the passages, and the fire official for that floor would stand at the phone, with everyone lined up behind him, shoes in hand, to wait for the go-ahead to start going down the fire escapes. All sixteen floors!

What Eskom Centre staffers today know as the Harrison/Wolmarans parking used to be staff flats, and whoever lived there was the envy of everyone who had to sit in the Smit St / Wolmarans St traffic every morning. When the various regions came into being, staff from Western Transvaal was also always envied, because when they went into the region, it was to Thabazimbi, Lichtenburg, (then) Warmbad, etc, and they could stock up on fresh fruit and vegetables at the farm stalls along the way.

Something that got lost by the wayside was a wonderful staff canteen on the 16th floor. For a token price you could have a cooked meal or take-away every day. There was also a lovely executive dining room, all polished wood, gleaming silver and starched white tablecloths. The managers used to get their tea served at their desks, on individual trays with teapot and cup, served by a waiter in a white jacket. There was a pub too that the managers could use after their PTC meetings.
In December the building usually was so quiet that some people literally moved their chairs to the passages so that they could see other faces. If you worked in the library (the one that eventually moved to Pretoria), you were never alone in December. Everyone came there to read the newspapers, drink coffee and shoot the breeze with the other few skeletons in the building. (And hijack your manager’s tea until the waiter caught on that the manager was on leave!)

Eskom Centre also had its fair share of sad stories. The toilet doors, for instance, were painted in different colours: black and white, and grey for those who did not mind to share!

The first staff member to be diagnosed with HIV/AIDS worked in HR, then on the first floor. This person was sent home to die due to people’s attitudes, and the whole floor was not used for a while for fear of being infected!

During the Inkatha killings in 1991 there was a drive-by shooting in B2 parking. Cafeteria staff was killed, and Livingstone Morotoba was the only one who was spared, because he was a Zulu.

The air-conditioning system also had to be changed at one stage, because there was a breakout of Legionnaire’s disease, contracted through the air conditioning.
Eskom power line in Conservancy

Due to grid overload, Eskom proposed the establishment of a new power line in the Cullinan Conservancy. The initial power line was proposed, and after a meeting with affected parties and the Conservancy, Eskom adjusted the route. The new route is 4km longer, but has minimal impact on the environment because it follows existing servitudes and property borders. The Conservancy awarded their Guinea Fowl award to Eskom, who really went out of their way to protect and preserve the environment, and took their inputs seriously.
Trees are the lungs of the earth.
Plant a tree this season

Warning: Do not plant trees under electricity power lines - this can endanger your lives

Report trees too close to electrical lines to Eskom Call Centre: 08600 37566

Zero fatalities • Zero injuries • Zero environmental incidents • Zero tolerance
WHERE WE ARE TODAY.....

Reading about the history of Eskom is fascinating, but learning about what we are doing today to keep up the momentum and bringing the Gauteng Operating Unit to the next level is just as important. Today our employees and our customers are king, and we go to great lengths to care for the community, educate them and make them part of the Eskom family. Our leadership is in close contact with our employees through regular visits to all areas in the operating unit, and our employees have big hearts when it comes to supporting those in need. All these efforts are part of the Gauteng Operating Unit’s efforts to help make Eskom an even greater company – one that will be one of the five top utilities in the world!
Eskom going on...

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CHANGE
SOUTH AFRICA
WILL YOU SAVE 10% ELECTRICITY?
MAKE YOUR PLEDGE
YOUR ACTIONS AFFECT OUR BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY