



Celebrating
90 years of powering the Nation

LIMPOPO OPERATING UNIT

Content

Foreword	01
A bird's eye view of Limpopo Province	02
The journey – from VFP to Escom/Evkom to Eskom	08
Lighting up Limpopo	09
Pretoria Distributor	10
Overview of Eskom business in Limpopo	14
Transmission Northern Grid Heritage	16
Matimba in perspective	18
Medupi – the dawn of a new era	20
2012 sees the birth of the Limpopo Operating Unit	26
– Thohoyandou Zone	27
– Polokwane Zone	28
– Groblersdal Zone	29
– Tzaneen Zone	30
– Lephalale Zone	31
How we care about the environment	32
2010 We were there	34
Limpopo benchmarking Zero Harm	36
Proud Guardians – Our Moments	38
A pillar of strength in the community	42
The old hands speak	44



FOREWORD

Limpopo: Our journey

Limpopo is South Africa's northern most province and borders three countries, which makes it the ideal entrance into Africa.

The province is named after the great Limpopo River flowing along its northern border. It is rich in wildlife, spectacular scenery and a wealth of historical and cultural treasures. Eskom has always been part of this land and it, too, has a great history and a certain future in Limpopo. The Matimba Power Station and the existence of the former Northern Region are just but part of the marks Eskom has made in this part of the country. As we go forward, Eskom will exist as the Limpopo Operating Unit.

This book will take you on our journey in Limpopo and the new direction we have taken in the province. The story about Eskom is not one we can tell in one book; it is a story ingrained in the minds of the people we have touched and whose lives we have improved through our product. In some instances it's a story of struggle, celebrated milestones and great triumphs. It is a story that also promises a great future; a future of a sustainable electricity supply and the ultimate access to electricity for all.

When facts are shared about this province, people remember how rural we are, how far we are from the main centres of business, and they wonder how we will develop. The answer is easy: Eskom's growth in this part of the country will stimulate economic activity, thus driving job creation and improving the lives of the people here. We as an organisation are not immune to the challenges facing the country, but this is where some of the answers will be found.

The current construction of the Medupi power station, one of the largest undertaken in the world, has already had a significant socio-economic effect on the community of Lephalale, the Limpopo Province, South Africa and, indeed, the region. On completion, Medupi will be powering developments throughout the country and its neighbouring states. We have been bestowed this great responsibility by being leaders in our field. Our success will have a profound effect in shaping this province now and in the future.

Over the past decade this region has seen the fastest growing electricity networks within South Africa. The electrification of schools and villages has been one of the greatest milestones Eskom has achieved in the province. Although there is still plenty to be done, we can be, and are, proud of our efforts. The continued partnerships with our communities have seen Eskom support many initiatives that have only one objective: that of improving the lives of the people. We aim to continue being the best corporate citizen in the province. Although we have faced many challenges in the province and, indeed, overcome them, we are still looking forward to delivering on our mandate and doing excellently at all times.

I urge you to read this book and share our history as we look forward to a great and prosperous future.



Rhulani Matshidze
Limpopo Operating Unit General Manager



A proud Venda woman exhibits her traditional pots

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF Limpopo Province

Limpopo Province, situated on the northern tip of the country, is a province filled with a rich history and diverse cultures.

People have lived in this lovely and abundant place for a long time. The first people to inhabit the area were the San (Bushmen). These Stone Age nomads left their mark on the land in the form of rock paintings that are of great archaeological importance. The Khoi-Khoi was the next group to inhabit the area. They were stock farmers, constantly on the move in search of better pastures. Archaeological evidence also suggests that black tribes inhabited Limpopo during both the Stone and Iron Ages. All these groups contribute to the cultural diversity of Limpopo.

The European influence came in the form of the Voortrekker settlers who left the Cape during the first half of the nineteenth century in search of a better life. Missionaries and teachers followed in their footsteps and more Europeans arrived towards the end of the nineteenth century, when mining opportunities opened up in the province.

Many "Voortrekker" (pioneer) graves, memorials and wagon tracks are found throughout Limpopo, reminders of these early European settlers.

Limpopo is not short on cultural diversity. The province has three main cultures: the Venda tribe, the Pedi tribe and, last but not least, the Tsonga tribe. Each has its own unique identity, language and practice.

The Pedi belong to the Sotho nation and have made the eastern section of the province their home. The Venda are descendants of the Zimbabwean Karanga, who came to the area during the sixteenth century. They speak a language that differs substantially from any of the other African languages spoken in South Africa. The Tsonga are a diverse people, generally including the Shangaan, Thonga, Tonga and several smaller ethnic groups. They are mostly from the former Northern Transvaal, from an area known as Gazankulu.

In a province so rich in culture, it becomes difficult to choose the favourite ones. To illustrate how serious the province is about its cultural heritage, herewith an excerpt from a 2007 cultural heritage resource survey for Eskom's proposed Duvha / Leseding power line through the Tjate Valley:

The Tjate Valley is one of the most important heritage valleys in the northern part of South Africa. As such its heritage resources should be protected and made accessible to the people.

“The Tjate Valley is one of the most important heritage valleys in the northern part of South Africa. As such its heritage resources should be protected and made accessible to the people. The valley will soon be declared a Provincial Heritage site, which will give it the necessary protection against development and exploitation.”

The most popular sites in Limpopo, all steeped in history:

Mapungubwe

On 8 April 1933, The Illustrated London News reported a remarkable discovery in the then Transvaal: a grave of unknown origin, containing much gold-work, found on the summit of a natural rock stronghold in a wild region. This site, Mapungubwe Hill, is on the farm Greefswald, where the international borders of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana meet.

Since the site was discovered in 1933, numerous research and news reports have told the story of Mapungubwe, a flourishing Iron Age metropolis on the Limpopo River, ruled by an African king almost a thousand years ago. Mapungubwe and K2 are National Monuments and therefore the cultural objects from these sites have been proclaimed as part of a specifically-declared heritage collection. The Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape became South Africa’s fifth World Heritage site in July

2003 and in May 2004 it was officially announced as Mapungubwe National Park.

The remains of this ancient society, now known as the Kingdom of Mapungubwe, lay forgotten for more than seven centuries until, in the early 1930s, a local resident revealed their existence to the University of Pretoria. Today, the Mapungubwe Museum at the University of Pretoria promotes the largest archaeological gold collection in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The two main sites, Mapungubwe and K2, were proclaimed National Monuments in the early 1980s. It was, without a doubt, South Africa’s first City of Gold!

Thulamela

The discovery of the stone citadel of Thulamela, which means ‘place of birth’ in the VhaVenda language, is regarded as one of the most important archaeological sites in South Africa.

Lying west of Pafuri, Thulamela was a stone-walled city atop a plateau in the Soutpansberg, and archaeological digs there revealed a well-organised mountain kingdom, ruled by an African monarch that flourished between 1200 and 1600AD.

Evidence of early humans is also found in the area, dating back some 1.5 million years. The San people also lived in the area as far back as



Beads used for adornments



Ndebele women showcase their wonderful handmade creations



The drum used for cultural celebrations



The Arend Dieperink Museum

The museum portrays the history of the town and its surroundings from the time of the apemen at Makapan's Cave, right through to the Anglo-Boer War and recent times.

100 000 years ago. Some 2 000 years ago, the first Nguni speaking people, looking for more grazing land for their cattle, migrated south into the area and displaced the San.

By 800 AD, the Arabs started raiding the area for slaves, using the ports in Mozambique. A civilisation also sprang up in the northern regions of the park. They built the Thulamela Stone Citadel, which was occupied from 1250 to 1700 AD. They also extracted iron ore from up to 200 mines, converting it into iron for trade.

Archaeologists have recently excavated the tombs of an African king and queen who ruled here during the 16th century. They named her Queen Loshá - because she was buried with her hands placed under her cheeks in a position of great respect known as loshá, and him, King Ingwe - meaning leopard, because on the day his grave was found, a leopard was waiting as the excavating team returned to their vehicle.

Arend Dieperink Museum

The Arend Dieperink Museum in Mokopane (Potgietersrus) contains a valuable cultural-historical collection of Voortrekker and Sotho artefacts, and is housed in a graceful stone building originally built as a school. The museum portrays the history of the town and its surroundings from the time of the apemen at Makapan's Cave, right through to the Anglo-Boer War and recent times. The exhibit includes a replica of a typical bosveldhuis, the type of dwelling in which the white farmers lived.

Masorini Iron Age Museum

This late Iron Age site can be found on a prominent hillside just 12 km from the Phalaborwa gate on the tar road to Letaba rest camp in the Kruger National Park.

The site was inhabited by the Sotho-speaking BaPhalaborwa during 1800s, who developed an advanced and sophisticated industry of mining, smelting iron ore and trading in these iron products. The ancestors of the BaPhalaborwa made a living from the melting of iron. The smelters lived on the lower terrace at Masorini and the foragers on the higher terrace, since they had a higher standing in society.

Dome-shaped clay furnaces found on the site were used to smelt the iron ore. Skin bags attached to the end of clay piping were used as bellows. These clay pipes led into the dome furnaces through 2-3 openings. The ore would flow into the middle of the furnace due to the inward sloping floors and once cooled would be removed and stored.

When there was enough smelted ore for production it would be reheated, beaten (to remove impurities) and moulded into the desired products such as spears, arrowheads and simple agricultural implements.

There is a splendid view of Shikumbu Hill from the Masorini hilltop, where the Chieftain lived. In the shock waves following the rise of the Zulu kingdom early in the 19th Century, Masorini ended as a settlement.

The Cave of Hearths is one of only two Stone Age sites in the world that contain an unbroken sequence of artefacts from the Earlier Stone Age to the Later Stone Age.

Makapans Valley

The Makapans Valley in Limpopo is the only cultural heritage site of its kind. It contains history of the Ndebele people and resistance wars dating back 151 years. People in this area are conscious of the universal value of the site as they celebrate the history and prepare for the preservation challenges as communities.

Visitors to Mokopane Valley in the Waterberg should not miss the opportunity to visit Makapan's Cave, where extensive cultural and palaeontological deposits have played a crucial role in furthering our understanding of later human evolution and the appearance of modern man.

The Cave of Hearths is one of only two Stone Age sites in the world that contain an unbroken sequence of artefacts from the Earlier Stone Age to the Later Stone Age.

The Cave of Gwasa, one of the historic caves in Limpopo, was a site of repeated refuge from conflicts. The Voortrekkers named the cave Makapan's Cave, after the great chief Makapan who, with several thousand members of the Kekana chiefdom, attacked a party of trekboere at Moorddrift.



The Makapans Valley



Baobab tree

The Old Baobab Tree at Modjadji is an absolute must-see. The enormous baobab is around 4 000 years old and has a circumference of almost 50m.

Old Baobab Tree, Modjadji

The Old Baobab Tree at Modjadji is an absolute must-see. The enormous baobab is around 4 000 years old and has a circumference of almost 50m. It looks as if two trees are growing next to each other, although it is supposed to be only one tree. A bar has been built in the hollow trunk, but here you will have to pay to see inside.

Dzata Ruins and Museum of the Drum

Can you hear the drum beat; can you feel the earth spin? Venture off the beaten track 50km north-east of Makhado (Louis Trichardt) and you'll find the Museum of the Drum and Dzata ruins.

The rural peacefulness of the place makes it hard to believe that this was once a thriving community. This significant archaeological site is the remains of the royal kraal of the Venda kings and dates back more than six thousand years, to the 1400s.

Leydsdorp Hotel

This is an eccentric historic hotel in a ghost town that celebrates the wilder side of the gold rush days. It is officially situated in the City of Leydsdorp, the smallest city in South Africa and once the capital of the Lowveld. It was named in honour of President Paul Kruger's secretary of state, Dr William Leyd. Having shot his first lion at the age of twelve, Paul Kruger was a keen hunter and used to visit his hunting house (which can still be seen today) on a regular basis. In fact,



Dzata Ruins

he enjoyed it so much, that when he needed to put his signature on a few important documents that were only allowed to be signed in a city, he proclaimed Leydsdorp as such.

And thus Leydsdorp was proclaimed an official city on 1 October 1890. However; the history of Leydsdorp started as early as 1870 with the discovery of gold, the extent of which was fully recognised in 1887/8, starting the 2nd gold rush in South Africa. Sadly, just when Uncle Paul thought he could maintain state control over the mining through the proclamation of the area as the Selati Goldfields, the sudden and rapid boom ended as quickly as it had started.

Strijdom House and Waterberg Museum

Found in Modimolle, Strijdom House and Waterberg Museum offers a comprehensive

reflection of the life and times of the South African War (Anglo-Boer War) in the Waterberg area (where fighting was particularly fierce). JG Strijdom, a former South African premier, was known as the “Lion of the North” and his house, furnished with his belongings, can be seen in Church Street in the town and is open to visitors. The Waterberg Museum is part of this complex.

The Tallest Bluegum Tree

The bluegum tree, found in Woodbush Forest in Magoebaskloof, is the tallest bluegum tree in the country. It's nearly 90 metres tall and was planted in 1905!

The mystery of Queen Modjadji, the Rain Queen

The Kingdom of Modjadji, situated in the Limpopo Province, comprises of a rural community of over 150 villages. The Balobedu Kingdom has a population of more than a million people. Apart from her ruling duties, Modjadji also has the duty of providing her nation with rain.

Other popular attractions

Meropa Casino (Polokwane)

Meropa Casino and Entertainment World is situated in Limpopo, 5km from the capital Polokwane. There are 12 tables, and 324 slots including the Dream Machine and Poker Magic – this is an encounter with a wild thing in more ways than one. The casino floor offers something for everyone; there are two American Roulette and two Blackjack tables situated in the smoking area and in the non-smoking area there are four American Roulette and four Blackjack tables.

Kruger National Park

The Kruger National Park is ranked along with the best in Africa and is the flagship of the country's national parks – rated as the ultimate safari experience. The Kruger National Park lies across the provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo in the northern part of South Africa, just south of Zimbabwe and west of Mozambique. It now forms part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park – a peace park that links Kruger National Park with game parks in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and fences are already coming down to allow game to roam more freely.

Zion Christian Church Easter Festival

The largest Christian gathering in South Africa happens twice a year at Zion City, Moria, near Polokwane at Easter and again for the September festival. The Zion Christian Church's headquarters are at Zion City Moria.

Moria, about 25 kilometres east of Polokwane, is the seat of the Zion Christian church – an entirely black denomination with over four million members formed in 1910 by Engenas Lekganyane – an indigenous church to Africa that is one of the only churches not established by evangelists from abroad.

Adventures With Elephants

Ready for a mind-blowing experience with elephants in Bela-Bela (Warmbaths)? Adventures with elephants provide thrilling hands-on interactions with the wonderfully tame elephants. Learn more about elephants and witness their intelligence, compassionate nature and delight in interacting with their human companions. Friendly, experienced and qualified elephant handlers share their in-depth knowledge and passion for their charges.



Tourists in Modjadji village



Kruger National Park - lions pride comes with cubs



Adventures with elephants found in Bela-Bela

THE JOURNEY – FROM VFP to Escom/Evkom to Eskom

The story of Eskom starts as early as 1923, when Escom / Evkom was established.



The Power Act, introduced on 28 May 1910 by the Transvaal Colonial Government, limited the future existence of the Victoria Falls Power Company Ltd. 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, hence the establishment of Escom / Evkom.

In accordance with conditions first stipulated in the Power Act of 1910 and included in the Electricity Act of 1922, all assets of the VFP were expropriated and taken over by Escom in 1948. Escom inherited a well-planned and properly established VFP power system. A new Rand Undertaking was formed. Extensions to existing power stations at Colenso, Congella, Rosherville, Vaal, Witbank, West Bank and Kimberley Central were undertaken.

Soaring demand for power challenged Escom in the post-war period. This demand came

from industrial growth in the Vaal Triangle (Vereeniging/Vanderbijlpark/Sasolburg) area, on the Witwatersrand and in the big cities. While this major expansion and reinforcement in the Eastern, Western and Southern sectors were taking place, the northern areas, in particular the Northern Transvaal (now Limpopo), were also awakening.

Following a tentative enquiry regarding the possibility of providing supply from Warmbad, it was felt that this was likely to be the forerunner of major development in the Northern Transvaal and it was planned accordingly that a 275kV line should be constructed from Esselen distribution station to Warmbad. Work on this project commenced in 1965.

This 275kV line was initially operated at 88kV and supply furnished to Warmbad in May 1966, and was operated in this manner for about 21 months. In the meantime, as hoped, negotiations had been completed with Pietersburg Municipality for a supply at Potgietersrus, which Pietersburg was supplying, and in February 1968, the Esselen

– Warmbad line was converted to a 132kV operation, and the 132kV substation at Warmbad commissioned, together with the Warmbad – Potgietersrus 132kV line, from which a temporary supply at the latter point was made available.

The development was not by any means complete in this area, and even as the above supplies were being given, the 132kV line to Potgietersrus was being extended via Pietersburg to Louis Trichardt, a distance of some 110 kilometres. Supply to this municipality was furnished towards the end of 1968.

Following the application by a large number of farmers in the Brits District for supply, the 88kV system was also extended north to provide a convenient step-down station near Brits to supply their needs. Following this development, a new supply to the Brits Municipality, which had previously been supplied by the Pretoria Municipality, was made available.

LIGHTING UP

Limpopo

Due to huge demand, Eskom expanded its distribution and transmission systems.

Following the appointment of Dr John B Maree as Chairman in 1985, Eskom was restructured to meet the electricity demands of a changing South Africa. The Electricity Supply Commission (Eskom) was replaced by an Electricity Council (appointed by Government) with a Management Board appointed by the Electricity Council. In 1987, Eskom was renamed Eskom.

At the same time, the distribution activities of Eskom were ring-fenced into twelve regions, with the Northern Transvaal resorting under the North Eastern Transvaal, with its regional head office in Nelspruit. The area stretched as far as Messina, Alldays, Pietersburg, Phalaborwa, Lydenburg, Burgersfort, Barberton, Komatipoort and the Kruger National Park. The self-governing states of KaNgwane, Gazankulu, Venda and parts of Lebowa fell within these boundaries.

Polokwane was then still known as the town, not city, Pietersburg. Eskom was situated in the Pietersburg District office, with depots situated in Pietersburg, Dendron, Alldays and Messina, which did the operation and maintenance of 18 rural 22kV networks. The entire area covered 60% of the entire North Eastern region, all of 64 249 km², with 3 830km of HV overhead lines.

The new regional office in Hans van Rensburg St was completed in 1991. With 165 employees in the district, Pietersburg was ready for action!

There were a few other “firsts” in this area during the 80s and early 90s:

- In 1989, this area was a leader in Eskom with a world-wide breakthrough, when the first solar system was installed in the Alldays area. Danie Snyman, an engineer from Eskom Nelspruit, started researching the economic viability of solar systems. The system was used mostly for pumping water for cattle and game. The system cost Eskom the princely sum of R25 000 instead of R50 000 to install!
- On 17 June 1989, the North's own Control Centre took over the network from Komatipoort to Messina - 11 550 km of lines from 11kV to 400kV.
- On 6 December 1989 a button was pushed, and Elandsdraal's 2042 stands received electricity.
- At the Chairman's Awards of 1990, Wilson Kekana of the Pietersburg District was the only nominee from the North, for his marketing of the Elandsdraal electrification project.
- The new Phalaborwa office opened on 15 August 1990. They previously ran a field office from Molengraaf Street until the opening of Selati in the 70s.
- Of course, another great highlight in the history of this area was the commissioning of the Matimba Power Station just outside Ellisras – the largest direct air-cooled power station in the world and winner of the 1988 SA Institute of Mechanical Engineers, Projects and Systems Award.





First electrification project in Lephalale

PRETORIA Distributor

1992 saw the creation of five Distributors in an attempt to get closer to the customer. On 1 April 1992 the head office of the Pretoria Distributor opened its doors in Menlyn, Pretoria.

It was a unique blend of North Western, Eastern and North Eastern Transvaal employees. Many people moved from all over this vast area to Pretoria. The Rustenburg, Bela-Bela and Thabazimbi areas from the former Western Transvaal Region were now firmly part of the Pretoria Distributor.

The focus of the Distributor was customer service, with three Sales and Customer Services (SACS) offices: North West SACS in Menlyn, Eastern in Witbank and North Eastern in Nelspruit. All the support services for their functions were based at the head office in Menlyn. Although the restructuring was deemed a success, there was a bigger challenge waiting in the aligning and re-engineering of the business processes to suit the changed structure the Distributor was operating in.

Under this new Distributor, the (then) Northern Transvaal experienced quite a lot of firsts, and this is excluding the momentous event of Pietersburg becoming a city in the same year, 1992.

- The first live-line unit in North Eastern Transvaal was introduced at the Bedford depot, near Hoedspruit, on 20 March 1992.

- On 16 March 1992 the Messina depot became the proud holders of the Myburgh trophy for the best depot. One of the aims of this achievement was to use as little petrol as possible in the vehicles, and Danie Burger's example of 16.25l/100kms was something to strive for!
- 1993 saw the Lebowa and Gazankulu takeovers. Lebowa personnel moved into the Nedbank building in Pietersburg, which meant that Nelspruit was not the only one with a Nedbank building! An Eskom office was also opened in Tzaneen.
- Another line that caught the imagination was the Kremetartlyn (Baobab line), a 132kV line that was built between Louis Trichardt and Messina in 1994. This line had to be built in a very sensitive mountain area with lots of baobab trees and other plants. Not one tree was removed during construction of the line – if needed, they built around a tree! At the end of the project Eskom made a donation of 1000 young baobab trees to the farmers to plant at their gates – a token of Eskom's commitment to the environment.
- Pietersburg became the gateway to Africa on 1 April 1995, when their very own SACS



Old Pretoria Distributor events and staff

office was opened there with Sipho Tjabadi at the helm. Their vision was without a doubt satisfied, loyal and committed customers. The Northern Province had previously been serviced by North Eastern SACS from Nelspruit, but because of the vastness of the area (106 066 sq. km) and the electrification, RDP and customer services challenges, management decided to divide the North Eastern Transvaal SACS area. The new SACS office was situated in the Nedbank building, with customer service centres in Pietersburg, Tzaneen and Phalaborwa. At the end of 1996 the electrification of residential customers was a healthy 313 179.

This northern part of Eskom now became the Northern Region, to differentiate it from the North East Region. It was a fast-growing region, and one with heart.

- The last of the so-called "homeland" takeovers was the Venda Electricity Corporation, which was taken over by Eskom on 1 April 1996. Eskom, VEC and the three trade unions were involved. The agreement was signed after three months of negotiations. This step involved the future of all 400 permanent

employees of VEC. The transfer was in line with a Cabinet decision of September 1994 to rationalise the electricity supply industry as a result of the reincorporation of the former TBVC countries and self-governing territories, including the former Republic of Venda. Eskom made offers of employment to the VEC staff, and those who accepted were incorporated in the Northern Region.

- Another heart-warming event took place in the beginning of 1996, when the community of Mafefe in the Capricorn District received electricity for the first time. This brought an end to many months of hard work and dedication by a great number of people. The electrification of Mafefe was a special project in that new economical technology was piloted.

The system was single-phase technology instead of the usual expensive technology. Circuit-breaker technology was tested for the first time in this area and, perhaps most importantly, was done with the maximum participation of the community.

Most of the work was done by the community themselves under the supervision of the

ESKOM

Noordoos-Transvaal



ESKOM

Die b...
ven...
st...
ontv...



...nt. Vally Mabasa
Eskom kantoor in
...in: sover vir elek-
die aorvraag neem

Bylae by Die Laevelder, Lydenburg-Nuus, Letaba H

Pietersburg is bedrywig

MET 'n oppervlakte van 64 249 vierkante kilometer beslaan Pietersburg-distrik 60, persent van die hele Noordoos-Transvaalstreek.

Daar is vier depot's naamlik Pietersburg, Dendron, Alldays en Messina. Die bedryf en instandhouding van 18 landelike 22 kV skemas word deur die depot's gedoen.



Daar is 165 personeellede in delings wat deur hulle bedryf uit Bestuur, Onderhoud en sics, Bemaking, Diens Hulpbronne, Konstruksie en

In die voorsieningsgebied 3 830 km hoogspanning gebruik om krag aan kliente die oppervlakte sowel as die Bedryfpersoneelsterkte in ag dit 'n reuse taak wat d uitgevoer word.



Vir die negentigs is daar 'n vir die distrik wag betrefte fisering van ontwikkelende eerste projek was Elandskraal.

In Eskom annual awards are made to the best achievers in the company. One of NETR's employees, Wilson Kekana of Pietersburg District, was the only one from the region to be nominated this year. He was voted best achiever in the B-band category. Wilson received his award from the Chairman of the Electricity Board, Dr John Maree, at a function in Johannesburg. Wilson is responsible for marketing power at Elandskraal near Marble Hall.



District office in Phalaborwa

PHALABORWA — Eskom's new District Office was opened on the 15th August 1990. During a cheese and wine function Mrs Carmen Erasmus, wife of the mayor of Phalaborwa, Councillor D.J.J. Erasmus, traditionally cut the ribbon and declared the District Office as officially opened.

Mr Brian Jacobsen, District Manager said that Eskom ran a field office from Moleenraaf Street during the Sixties until the Selati Office opened in the seventies. Eskom continued to grow in the next decade and the latter part of the Eighties saw them occupying a building opposite the Albany Bakery. Very soon this proved to be far too small for this dynamic company and expansion was inevitable.

Negotiations started between Mr Brian Jacobsen of Eskom and Mr Paul Avenant. This resulted in a superb office building catering to the specific needs of Eskom.

Dignitaries from all sectors of the community attended the opening ceremony.



The Phalaborwa District Office drink a toast to their modern new office. From left are ...
Dirik, Toekie du Plooy, Hannelle Wolmarans, Barbara Müller, Maggie Cawood, Elsie Smit and Rina Brits.

contractors and consulting engineers. This brought about jobs and skills creation, including some permanent jobs for maintenance and revenue management functions.

It was at the time believed that the success of this project will lead to great savings in the electrification field.

- In June 1999 the Northern Region's own call centre opened in Pietersburg. Although there were different call centre numbers for Rustenburg, Phalaborwa and Thohoyandou, all the calls were directed to the Pietersburg Call Centre. In August 2001 they were already receiving an average of 22 300 calls per month, which meant an average of 1 394 calls per agent per month.
- Safety has always been priority in the region, and the Tzaneen FSC could celebrate one million injury-free man-hours in July 2001 – indeed an excellent achievement!
- In 2001 the region hosted the first-ever ultra-marathon in the area, the Potgietersrus / Pietersburg ultra-marathon. The cream of SA's athletes came together to make this a highly successful event.
- Eskom's Transmission team in the Northern Region was also hard at work during this time. In 2001 this team was a finalist in the 2001 Productivity Awards of the National Productivity Institute. They received a certificate of recognition for outstanding achievement in productivity improvement. The Northern Region's Transmission manager at the time, Solly Matlala, attributed the award to his management team for their willingness to push the boundaries by challenging anything or anyone constructively and giving innovative solutions and alternatives.