



## **ESKOM PROBLEM IS NO LONGER AN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PROBLEM**

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The Eskom problem is no longer an industrial relations problem but something more sinister.

We know, thanks to World Bank research, that Eskom is overstaffed and overpaid. The staff have received above-inflation increases for a decade and the benefits they enjoy are on a par with the best, so it is most unlikely that there are any genuine work-related grievances.

From the outside it looks very much as if they are simply abusing their power for their own gain. In the process they're forcing up the price of electricity and load-shedding is endangering the jobs of other workers and undermining the economy of the country.

Eskom is an essential industry and that means that strikes are illegal. Even worse have been the reports of sabotage and preventing deliveries of coal to power stations. This is criminal behaviour and it is time it was treated as such.

It's also suicidal behaviour because it means higher tariffs for electricity will simply encourage many more customers to generate their own electricity. This is already happening and there will be a great deal more of it because the cost of solar power continues to fall while Eskom power gets more expensive every year.

It's also time to ask how many of Eskom's employees are ghost workers. There has been so much corruption in Eskom that it is quite possible that names or "ghosts" have been added to the payroll. It is time Eskom did a roll call.

Janine Myburgh

President of the Chamber



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