



Load shedding in Midstream 2020

Questions & Answers

1. Why a 4-hour load shedding period rather than twice as many 2-hour blocks?

As per <https://loadshedding.eskom.co.za/loadshedding/ScheduleInterpretation> the length of time for a load shedding block is stated as follows:

ESKOM: Load shedding will be implemented in most instances in 2-hour blocks.

However, in Eskom-supplied Johannesburg areas, blocks are 4-hours long. This is to coincide with City Power's 4-hour schedule.

The entire Johannesburg region of ESKOM endures 4-hour load shedding blocks. It is not true that Midstream ended with 4-hour schedule after botched/ failed negotiations with ESKOM. MES has been in contact with Eskom requesting to rather receive twice as many 2-hour load shedding blocks than the 4-hour blocks with the response still awaited.

2. Who switches the power off, and on again, for load shedding?

For consumers connected directly to the ESKOM network, as Midstream is, the National Control Centre of ESKOM switches the power off and on remotely.

To minimise any possible negative impact, MES has personnel on duty whenever load shedding takes place to oversee the timeous switching of the power, especially when not be switched on again. It did happen in the past that ESKOM did not switch all the transformers on again resulting in an overload in some areas or some areas being without power. The control centre will be contact from 20 minutes after the due time to determine the cause. In some instances, the control centre was not able to switch it on again remotely and a technician was dispatched to switch it on locally at the dedicated 88/11kV Midstream transformer yard.

Cognisance must be taken that the 11kV-switching equipment (11 thousand Volt) of ESKOM will last longer and give fewer operational problems under 4-hour blocks as the number of times the breakers are switched will be halved under a 4-hour block schedule than the 2-hour blocks that will occur twice as often – thus, the rationale of City Power and the Johannesburg region of Eskom to utilise 4-hour blocks.



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3. The dreaded comeback load – what follows after the power is switched on again.

Beyond the intentional, and very understandable, notion of persons to switch the kettle on after the power is switched on again a number of automatic actions take place in a normal household when the fridge, geyser and other appliances run at full tilt to reset to normal operating conditions. The peaks during the comeback load is far higher than during normal peak periods and when a cold spell is experienced, the situation is worsened when residents immediately switch on heaters and other equipment – including the stove if power comes on around dinner time.

Residents are requested to assist in reducing the comeback load by not switching stoves or geysers on within the 30 minutes after the power came back on.

The peak load normalises within 30 minutes and residents are requested to assist in reducing the comeback load by not switching stoves or geysers on within the 30 minutes after the power came back on after power was reinstated following load shedding. (It must be said that the comeback load is higher – and thus worse – after a 4-hour block, opposed to a 2-hour block. MES will thus be in support should 2-hour blocks be approved by ESKOM as it will ease local operations, albeit to the detriment of the ESKOM 11kV switchgear)