

## Govt looks at rolling out nuclear power

Government is looking at the various aspects involved in the rolling out of nuclear energy, says the Department of Energy (DoE).

"The National Nuclear Energy Executive Coordination Committee (NNEECC) is looking at various aspects of rolling out the nuclear programme," said Deputy Director General for nuclear at the DoE, Zizamele Mbambo.

He was speaking on Thursday at a briefing on the programmes and projects of the department as presented in its 2013/14 budget vote speech.

The NNEECC, which comprises various government departments, is tasked with overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the policy and plans for nuclear power.

South Africa's nuclear energy policy was approved in 2008 and is further enhanced by the approval of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP 2010), which included that nuclear will form part of the country's energy mix to a level of 9600MW.

"We are busy working towards preparing to rollout that nuclear programme. One of key issues we indicated [is that] a decision needs to be taken this financial year on the procurement of a nuclear power plant," said Mbambo.

Work was also at an advanced stage in ensuring that the National Radioactive Disposal Institute comes into being soon.

### Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review completed

One of the highlights of the department is the completion of the integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review that was conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"We received the report at the end of May, which basically assesses the state of readiness of our nuclear energy infrastructure. We need to indicate that SA was commended for inviting the agency," he explained.

South Africa already produces nuclear power at the Koeberg nuclear power plant.

"This report is currently undergoing government processes. (After being) tabled in Parliament, we will receive a decision that will indicate how the report is treated in terms of it being released to the public," he added.

### Petroleum products

Also present at the briefing was Tsheliso Maqubela, the Deputy Director-General for petroleum products at the department. He said that in the current financial year - which concludes in March 2014 - the department will accelerate its pace as far as adjudication of licences goes.

Additionally, the department will have completed its position "in as far as the basic fuel price review".

"We've been directed to look at a new dispensation for paraffin prices and that process is on-going," he said.

## **Progress on Solar Park**

Meanwhile, CEO of the Central Energy Fund (CEF) and interim chairperson of PetroSA, Sizwe Mncwango, said that progress was being made on the feasibility study in the development of a solar park in the Northern Cape.

"We are on track to deliver the report through the department and ultimately to Cabinet. We expect to deliver that in the fourth quarter of the current financial year," said Mncwango.

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