

# Is Eskom imploding?

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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The number of incumbents who have warmed the chief executive's seat at Eskom in the last year continues to grow. But Greenpeace Africa says the revolving door on the power utility's corner office is indicative of an institution out of touch with modern business practices.



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There's been Brian Molefe version one and two, Matshela Koko held onto the reins for a brief while before he was suspended and now Johnny Dladla has been given the boot just six months after being appointed as acting CEO.

"Another Eskom CEO being removed at short notice is a clear sign of a lack of accountability and stability at the utility, and chaos reigns. The explanation of why this decision was taken simply does not make sense.

"The internal turbulence caused by sending chief executives from pillar to post is indicative of a business model that is clearly not flexible enough to provide the solutions that the South African public needs," Happy Khambule, Greenpeace Africa's political advisor says.

## Being left behind

Eskom is being left behind, and has been identified as a laggard this week in the report [Utilities in Transition](#). In fact, according to this report: "Eskom...provides an example of a utility that not only fails to respond to the energy revolution, but fails its owners and its customers as well".

"In a global economy steadily geared towards collaborative efforts to harness the disruptive power of renewable energy, Eskom must either bring an end to the turmoil, propaganda and lies, or its monopolist nature will destroy it. As South Africans, we are losing patience with the utility, especially when electricity prices continue to skyrocket through endless tariff increases. For Eskom to be viable, it has to be built on people power and trust as opposed to centralised power with no accountability," says Khambule.

## Media reports

Into Dladla's place, steps, Sean Maritz, the power utility's chief information officer and group executive of information

technology. According to a statement from Eskom: “The decision to rotate the interim CE position was taken with the approval of the shareholder to, inter alia, give exposure to another member of the executive team without compromising organisational stability.”

However, within a few hours of the announcement, media reports started to emerge that Maritz might be tarnished with the same brush as his predecessors.

He apparently received a disciplinary sanction for hiring a fellow member of his church on a salary of R100,000, without disclosing the friendship. He is also reported to have deleted e-mails pertaining to dealings with the Gupta family.

In response, Eskom has said: “We have noted with concern recent media reports with unsubstantiated allegations against Mr Maritz. We plead that he be given a chance to lead Eskom.”

## ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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