

Sapp powers ahead of targeted capacity

The Southern African Power Pool (Sapp) states commissioned 4,180MW of new generating capacity from new projects and rehabilitation of old power plants compared to a targeted 3,757MW last year, exceeding its generation capacity targets for 2016 by 11%.



Alison Chikova, acting Sapp OC manager

These included projects in Angola 780MW; Malawi 10MW; Mozambique 175MW; Namibia 15MW; South Africa 2,550MW; Tanzania 150MW; Zambia 300MW and Zimbabwe 200MW. The projects were commissioned by both public utilities and independent power producers (IPPs).

The generation mix for the new power plants commissioned in 2016 came from hydro (43%), gas (24 %), solar (11%), wind (10%), coal (7%) and diesel (5%).

These are some of the highlights that were discussed at the 49th Sapp conference of meetings earlier this week in Pretoria.

Eskom, a member of the Sapp, said that it had turned the corner and now had an operating surplus of energy available to support the region and empower economic growth. The challenge, the utility stated is to now focus on strengthening the transmission interconnections between the various countries in the region to allow the sharing of the available power.

"We stand ready to supply electricity to the region, allowing the growth of all our economies, creating an increased demand

for electricity, which in turn will stimulate the regional power generation sector,” said Abram Masango, acting chief executive of Eskom Enterprises.

Future plans

Part of the Sapp’s plan for the future is to continue to facilitate investment in new generation and transmission capacity. In 2017, the member states are planning to commission a total of 3,672MW from Angola (1,727MW), Botswana (120MW), Democratic Republic of Congo (150MW), Malawi (6MW), Mozambique (40MW), Namibia (70MW), South Africa (1,234MW), Tanzania (120MW), Zambia (55MW) and Zimbabwe (120MW).

“In addition to the new generation capacity, several old power stations have been refurbished. The Sapp has effectively removed its overall supply deficit and future plans of members indicate an intention to continue adding capacity with up to 28,264MW of possible projects being identified,” said These included projects in Angola 780MW; Malawi 10MW; Mozambique 175MW; Namibia 15MW; South Africa 2,550MW; Tanzania 150MW; Zambia 300MW and Zimbabwe 200MW. The projects were commissioned by both public utilities and independent power producers (IPPs).

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As of the end of April 2017, the member states had an installed generation capacity of 59,539MW and operating capacity of 54,397MW against a demand and reserve requirement of 53,478MW. “After many years of deficit, it is rewarding to see the region as a whole having a supply surplus. We need to increase the focus on transmission interconnection to ensure the overall surplus result in an end to deficits in each country,” said Chikova..