

Ariadne-Venus 400 kV line construction to resume

Eskom is set to resume work to complete construction of the final leg of the approximately 123-km of transmission power line in KwaZulu-Natal. The power line will run through the uMgungundlovu and uThukela District Municipalities, and will affect the Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Howick, Richmond and Mooi-River towns.



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The utility said the final construction of the 47-km leg of the power line will start from the existing Venus substation in Estcourt, and will end at the existing Ariadne substation in Pietermaritzburg.

Eskom has been engaging with government, environmental and all relevant structures in the area, laying the groundwork for construction to begin.

“It is important to note that this project will enable Eskom to fulfil its mandate of electricity provision to users in the area, as well as the entire province of KwaZulu-Natal. Since 2005, Eskom has been expanding its infrastructure through additional power stations and power lines, as well strengthening and upgrading existing electricity infrastructure,” said Bob Naraghi, grid manager at Eskom Transmission.

This in turn will ensure that electricity users experience reliable power supply and that the country’s electricity demands will be met.

“Noticing the far-reaching effects of Covid-19, which pushed millions of people into unemployment, underemployment or poverty, the project could not have started at a better time, with Eskom contributing to bringing about economic change within the communities of the affected local municipalities,” said Eskom.

Job opportunities

The project has set into motion social and economic changes by creating 190 job opportunities ranging from professional, skilled, semi-skilled and the unskilled workforce, benefitting communities within the municipalities affected by the construction.

About 70% of the employed workforce has been recruited from the locals within the relevant towns, with the entire team completing induction at the beginning of October 2020.

On completion, the project will not only contribute to improved stability of the transmission network, but will also create a more flexible network that will enhance electricity reliability.

“More importantly, this line will also contribute to the economic growth of the province,” said Naraghi.

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