

---

## South African power demand up - Eskom

Wednesday, 07 Oct, 2009

Reuters quoted Eskom as saying that South Africa's power demand has risen back to the highs before the start of the economic slowdown after slumping to levels last seen in 2005.

Eskom has been rationing power since early 2008 when the national grid nearly collapsed, forcing mines and smelters to shut for days and costing the biggest economy in Africa billions of dollars.

Mr Andrew Etzinger spokesman said that the utility was able to meet demand for now but the situation was of increasing concern. We've seen a steady increase in electricity demand over the past 3 months as large mines and smelters have returned to full production we have basically seen a full return of the demand to levels seen prior to the global economic crisis.

The utility has launched a ZAR 385 billion expansion program to boost supply but says it will take years before new power plants can be added to the system.

Eskom has temporarily benefited from a 4.2% drop in demand owing to the recession but large industrial consumers have resumed suspended operations, straining supply.

Mr Etzinger said that the utility expects demand to rise further by between 2% to 3% in the current financial year to March. He said that "The demand is steadily increasing and is putting our system under pressure it means our system is more vulnerable to incidents."

(Sourced from Reuters)

For more news visit at [www.steelguru.com](http://www.steelguru.com)