
S Africa coal truckers protest for better terms form Eskmos

Tuesday, 21 Apr, 2009

Reuters reported that South African coal truck owners protested outside utility Eskom's headquarters on last Friday, asking for better contract terms but coal supplies to its power stations were unaffected.

Mr Fani Zulu spokesman said that only a handful of power stations in South Africa, which depends on coal for more than 90% of its power were affected as stockpiles are high.

He said that "Coal stocks are on average at 40 days so the impact was minimal the impact was limited to a couple of hours of interruptions to coal deliveries at a handful of stations."

Mr Zulu said that the utility had since changed its contract strategy, handing over transport logistics to the mines supplying the coal.

He said that "That has resulted in the change in volumes that the truckers receive."

Truck owners said tat they have been struggling to make ends meet after contracts were given to bigger companies.

Eskom needed large volumes of coal 2008 to increase its stocks after a power crisis led to a near collapse of the national grid, forcing mines and smelters to shut for days and costing the biggest economy in Africa billions of dollars.

Mr Zulu said that with demand dropping on the back of the economic slowdown the utility managed to increase its stockpiles to healthy levels and now needed less coal.

The Coal Transporters' Forum handed a memorandum of demands to Mr Jacob Maroga CEO of Eskom asking him to address the dispute.

Mr Maroga indicated that the utility would do everything to avert a strike which could lead to renewed power shortages in the country, and said the utility would be available to meet the forum on Saturday to discuss solutions.

(Sourced from Reuters)

For more news visit at www.steelguru.com