

PROGRESS AT ESKOM'S INGULA PUMPED STORAGE IMPRESSES THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR



The Executive Mayor of Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality, Councillor Malefu Vilakazi, expressed gratification with the progress made in the construction of Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme by stated-owned electricity utility, Eskom, during her recent visit to the site, which is situated on the borders of Kwazulu-Natal and Free State.

Vilakazi was accompanied by the Executive Mayor of the neighbouring Kwazulu-Natal's Uthukela District Municipality, Councillor Dudu Mazibuko, and the management of Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme.

Ingula is situated 55km from Ladysmith, (20km northeast of Van Reenen) within the Drakensberg range, on the border between the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. It comprises of an upper dam (Bedford) and a lower dam (Braamhoek). The upper reservoir site is located in the Free State and the lower reservoir site in KwaZulu-Natal. The escarpment forms the border between the two provinces.

Eskom stated that upon completion Ingula will be the utility's third pumped storage scheme with an output of 1 332MW, mostly used during peak-demand periods. The station is expected to be fully operational at the end of 2015.

Water is stored in an upper reservoir. During peak periods, water is released to drive turbines to generate electricity, which will be fed into the national grid.

Vilakazi said she was excited about Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme as it will assist with the provision of electricity, especially during peak periods, and this showed Eskom's

commitment in ensuring that the country is not plunged into darkness because of pressed power supply.

“We are much excited that our district was able to be a co-host together with Uthukela District Municipality of such a massive project aimed at ensuring sufficient supply of electricity.

“The project has also made contributions towards job creation as our own people from local communities were employed by the scheme. We are also appreciative of the socio-economic developmental initiatives, which will be brought about by the construction of the scheme,” said Vilakazi.

Ingula is envisaged to be the largest hydroelectric power source in South Africa.