



## SABC DETAILED ANALYSIS

20230521\_It's Topical | Eskom's Stage 8 loadshedding ?-Expectations and readiness.en

Broadcast: SABC-Sendung | Analyzed: 2026-05-25 10:49

Version 3.0-detail | Universal 3.0-detail | Konverter 3.4 (2026-05-20) | Standard: Broadcasting Act s. 6

### OVERALL SCORE

**3.6/10**

*Slight imbalance*

0 = balanced, 10 = strongly biased/manipulative

## POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Classification based on Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) 2024

The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES 2024) is an academic survey of 609 political scientists in 31 countries. Each party is rated on a scale from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right).

Party	EFF	MK	ANC	IFP	DA	ActionSA	PA	FF+
CHES	1.50	3.50	4.50	6.00	6.50	6.50	7.00	8.00
Spectrum	<i>Left</i>	<i>Left</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Right</i>

The overall tendency is presented on a 0–10 scale (0 = strongly left-favoring, 5 = balanced, 10 = strongly right-favoring). The calculation is based on the difference in average favoritism of left vs. right parties (grouping per CHES 2024).

### TENDENCY (L – R)

**5.5 / 10**

*Balanced*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

← Left

Right →

Source: Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2024 — [chesdata.eu](https://chesdata.eu) | [Jolly et al., Electoral Studies, 2022](#) | Thresholds: [Pew Research Center](#)

This section provides political context and does not contribute to the overall score.



## POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

South Africa is governed by a Government of National Unity (GNU) formed after the 29 May 2024 general elections, in which the ANC lost its 30-year parliamentary majority for the first time since 1994. The GNU is a broad coalition led by the ANC (159 seats / 39.8%) together with the DA (87 seats / 21.8%), IFP (17 seats / 4.3%), PA (9 seats / 2.3%), FF+ (6 seats / 1.5%), and five smaller parties, totalling approximately 287 of 400 National Assembly seats. The main opposition outside the GNU consists of MK (58 seats / 14.6%, led by Jacob Zuma), EFF (39 seats / 9.5%, led by Julius Malema), ActionSA (6 seats / 1.5%), and ACDP (3 seats / 0.8%).

Party	CHES L-R (est.)	Seats	Government/Opposition	Core Position
EFF	1.5	39	Opposition	Far-left; land expropriation, nationalisation
PAC	2.0	1	Opposition	Left-wing Pan-Africanism
MK	3.0	58	Opposition	Left-populist, Zuma personality cult
ANC	4.0	159	GNU (lead)	Centre-left, broad church
UDM	4.5	3	GNU	Centre-left, rural base
Rise Mzansi	4.5	2	GNU	Centre-left progressive
GOOD	4.5	1	GNU	Centre-left progressive
Al Jama-ah	4.0	2	GNU	Left economics, socially conservative
DA	6.0	87	GNU	Centre-right, free market, liberal
ActionSA	6.5	6	Opposition	Centre-right, anti-immigration
IFP	6.5	17	GNU	Right-wing, Zulu nationalist
PA	7.0	9	GNU	Right-wing populist
ACDP	7.5	3	Opposition	Right-wing Christian conservative
FF+	8.0	6	GNU	Right-wing, Afrikaner interest

The historic ANC–DA coalition creates constant editorial tension, as any coverage favouring one partner over the other constitutes a primary bias vector. The legacy of state capture under the Zuma presidency (2009–2018) — documented by the Zondo Commission — remains the dominant explanatory framework for the energy crisis, making attribution of blame politically charged. The energy crisis itself was the ANC's single largest electoral liability in 2024, meaning coverage framing (success/failure, blame attribution, solutions) directly intersects with partisan interests. SABC's own history of political capture during the Motsoeneng era (2012–2016) means its editorial independence remains a live political question.

The SABC is South Africa's public broadcaster, mandated under the Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 and its own Charter to provide programming that serves all South Africans, meets the highest standards of journalism, and upholds fairness, accuracy, and impartiality. The BCCSA Code (Clauses 16 and 18) requires news and public affairs content to be reported truthfully, in correct context, in a balanced manner, and with opposing views presented on controversial matters of public importance. The SABC's history of editorial capture under the ANC government during the Motsoeneng era creates a structural credibility burden that makes compliance with these obligations especially significant.



## CHAPTER 1 — PARTY-POLITICAL BIAS

### Party Representation Assessment

Party	Score (-5..+5)	Broadcast Representation vs. Party Programme Position
ANC	-1	31:00–33:34 — Implicit in Cruz's statement: "the people that were making the decisions...were making decisions not so much for the betterments of the country...but more for the betterments of themselves" — Programme position: ANC presents itself as the party of transformation and renewal under Ramaphosa; the broadcast attributes the energy crisis to decisions made during the Zuma era without distinguishing between Zuma-era ANC and current ANC leadership — partially distorted by conflation
DA	0	Not mentioned by name. No DA policy positions referenced. — Not present in broadcast
MK (uMkhonto)	0	Not mentioned. — Not present in broadcast
EFF	+1	11:36 — Street interviewee: "that's where I attached by the eff presidents as a member of the opposition I understand where he's coming from because currently the country is in turmoil...it is his responsibility to hold the executive to account" — Programme position: EFF advocates radical accountability and state intervention; the reference is brief, secondhand, and sympathetically framed by the interviewee — broadly accurate but superficial
IFP	0	Not mentioned. — Not present in broadcast
PA	0	Not mentioned. — Not present in broadcast
FF+	0	Not mentioned. — Not present in broadcast
ActionSA	0	Not mentioned. — Not present in broadcast

#### Score Legend:

+5 = Party programme positions correctly and fully represented

0 = Party/topic not present in broadcast

-5 = Party programme positions actively distorted or misrepresented

### Party Bias Summary

- Most Accurate Representation: EFF (Score +1) — brief but sympathetically relayed secondhand reference
- Strongest Distortion: ANC (Score -1) — conflation of Zuma-era ANC with current ANC governance without editorial distinction
- Average Deviation from 0: 0.3
- Assessment: The broadcast is primarily a technical and human-interest programme on load shedding rather than a party-political debate, which explains the near-universal absence of party representation scores. The one substantive political attribution — the energy crisis caused by decisions made "10 to 15 years ago" under Zuma — is accurate in its historical framing but is presented without any counterbalancing acknowledgement of current ANC government responsibility or progress, creating a mild distortion by omission.



## CHAPTER 2 — PROGRAMME INFORMATION AND THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

### Programme Data

- Title: It's Topical
- Date: Estimated 2023 (winter season reference; Eskom stage 8 warnings; pre-GNU context — likely May–June 2023)
- Estimated Length: Approximately 52 minutes
- Presenter/Reporter: Blaine Herman (host); unnamed producer/reporter in Katlehong (field)
- Interviewees:

Actors	Function	Party/Affiliation	Political Spectrum
Prof. Sampson Mamphweli	Head of Energy Secretariat, SANEDI (South African National Energy Development Institute)	State entity (DMRE-linked)	Technocratic/state-aligned
Matthew Cruz	Head of Business Intelligence and Public Relations, Home Energy; former Eskom employee (11 years)	Private sector (energy industry)	Market-oriented
Nazreen Karim	Occupational Therapist	Private practice	Apolitical/professional
"Doc" (unnamed funeral parlour owner)	Small business owner, Katlehong	Civil society/informal economy	Apolitical
Multiple street interviewees (unnamed)	Members of the public, Johannesburg	General public	Varied
Multiple digital audience members (Lawrence, Nigel, Sipo, Tobekile, Hamilton, Tommy, Carabo, Desiree)	Members of the public	General public	Varied

### Main Topic

The programme examines the causes, current severity, and human impact of South Africa's escalating load shedding crisis, with particular focus on the risk of Stage 8 power cuts during the 2023 winter.

### World-Knowledge Context

South Africa's electricity crisis is the product of decades of underinvestment, mismanagement, and — as documented by the Zondo Commission — systematic corruption during the Zuma presidency (2009–2018), particularly at Eskom and in the construction of the Medupi and Kusile power stations. By mid-2023, Eskom's Energy Availability Factor (EAF) had fallen below 50%, meaning less than half of installed coal generation capacity was operational. The crisis has multiple dimensions: technical (ageing fleet, design flaws, deferred maintenance); financial (Eskom's R400+ billion debt, municipal arrears exceeding R50 billion); governance (board instability, skills flight); and political (state capture legacy, slow implementation of the Energy Action Plan announced by President Ramaphosa in July 2022). The crisis intersects with deep structural inequalities: wealthier households and businesses can invest in solar, inverters, and generators, while poor and township communities bear the full brunt of extended outages. The debate involves multiple competing camps: those who emphasise the state capture legacy as the primary cause; those who hold current ANC leadership accountable for slow remediation; those who advocate market-based solutions (IPPs, feed-in tariffs, privatisation); and those who prioritise social protection for vulnerable communities.



## CHAPTER 3 — 15 CRITERIA: DETAILED ANALYSIS

### Hard Facts — 9 techniques that are countable and scientifically verifiable

#### 1. EXPERT SELECTION

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**Expert 1:** Prof. Sampson Mamphweli — Head of Energy Secretariat, SANEDI

Timestamp: 03:02–10:38; 25:26–27:04; 28:44–29:53; 43:51–45:17

Statement: "it is a given partly because when we analyzed this power system long before eskom issued this slide we then realized that there was a possibility of a stage 10 load shedding"

Classification: State-linked energy research institution (SANEDI = South African National Energy Development Institute, a public entity under the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy). Mamphweli is the programme's primary technical authority.

Missing countervoice: An independent academic energy economist (e.g., from UCT's Energy Research Centre) or a private sector energy analyst not affiliated with a state entity would have provided an independent check on SANEDI's assessments.

#### Source Depth Check:

**(a) FUNDING:** SANEDI is a Schedule 3A public entity funded primarily by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and the National Treasury. It also receives funding from the Global Environment Facility and international development partners for specific programmes.

Conflict of interest: SANEDI's mandate is to advance South Africa's energy development agenda as defined by government policy. Its assessments are structurally aligned with government energy policy (IRP 2019, Energy Action Plan). SANEDI has an institutional interest in validating the government's energy planning framework rather than critiquing it fundamentally.

**(b) MANDATE:** SANEDI's mandate is "to research, develop and demonstrate new and renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies." This is compatible with technical analysis of the generation crisis but creates a structural bias toward solutions that align with government policy (IRP 2019, renewable transition) rather than market-based alternatives (privatisation, IPP acceleration beyond current policy).

D1 Conflict of Interest: 0 — State-funded but not directly politically appointed; SANEDI has some operational independence; however, structural alignment with DMRE policy is a moderate conflict.

D2 Personal Risk: +1 — Mamphweli's Stage 10 prediction (more severe than Eskom's own Stage 8 warning) represents a degree of institutional risk-taking; he is not simply validating official positions.

D3 Technical Competence: +2 — Energy engineering expertise is directly relevant to the subject matter; SANEDI's mandate aligns with the topic.

D4 Opinion Consistency: +1 — His claim to have predicted Stage 10 "long before Eskom issued this slide" suggests prior consistent analysis, though this cannot be independently verified from the transcript.

D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +1 — Predominantly data-referenced and analytical; uses specific figures (EAF targets, megawatt thresholds); avoids emotional language.

D6 Source Level: +1 — Primary expert (direct institutional knowledge); not citing secondary sources.

**TOTAL: +6 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: GREEN**

**(c) PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE:** Mamphweli is introduced as "a better mind" and "the good professor" — social credentialing language that frames him as a neutral authority. His institutional affiliation with a state entity is



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mentioned (SANEDI) but the structural alignment between SANEDI's mandate and government energy policy is not disclosed to viewers. This constitutes a mild application of Technique 2 (source selection framing).

**Expert 2:** Matthew Cruz — Head of Business Intelligence and PR, Home Energy; former Eskom employee (11 years)

Timestamp: 23:30–34:42; 49:38–50:31

Statement: "I would locate the issue that we're experiencing of the energy crisis being created actually back 10 years ago when we were meant to make the decisions to make sure we aren't in this current situation"

Classification: Private sector energy company (Home Energy — a solar/energy solutions provider). Former Eskom employee. Cruz has a direct commercial interest in the expansion of private and rooftop solar energy in South Africa.

Missing countervoice: A representative of Eskom itself, or a government energy official, would have provided the institutional perspective that Cruz's analysis implicitly critiques.

**Source Depth Check:**

**(a) FUNDING:** Home Energy is a private company operating in the South African solar and energy solutions market. Cruz's employer directly benefits commercially from government policies that incentivise private solar installation (feed-in tariffs, rooftop solar rebates) — the very solutions he advocates on air.

Conflict of interest: Cruz has a direct financial interest in promoting feed-in tariffs and private solar solutions. His advocacy for the Vietnam model (feed-in tariff) is simultaneously a policy recommendation and a commercial pitch for his employer's business model.

**(b) MANDATE:** Home Energy's commercial mandate is incompatible with neutral policy analysis on energy solutions. Cruz is a market participant, not a neutral analyst.

D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 — Direct commercial conflict: Cruz's employer profits from the policy solutions he advocates; this is not disclosed to viewers.

D2 Personal Risk: +1 — His criticism of the Zuma-era ANC and implicit criticism of current government carries some reputational risk in the South African context.

D3 Technical Competence: +1 — 11 years at Eskom provides genuine operational knowledge; however, his current role is in business intelligence and PR, not engineering.

D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior public statements available for comparison from transcript.

D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +1 — Mostly data-referenced (EAF figures, Vietnam 9,000 MW example); some rhetorical framing ("have your cake and eat it").

D6 Source Level: 0 — Secondary expert (former practitioner, now private sector); cites Vietnam example without primary source.

**TOTAL: +1 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW**

**(c) PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE:** Cruz is introduced as "well equipped to answer some of these questions" and his 11 years at Eskom are cited as his primary credential. His current employer (Home Energy) and its commercial interest in the policy solutions he advocates are not disclosed. This is a clear application of Technique 2 (source selection framing as neutral).

**Expert 3:** Nazreen Karim — Occupational Therapist

Timestamp: 37:04–40:35

Statement: "mental health has been a big concern...a study that has been done by the South African depression and anxiety group has actually shown that among 50 000 of its members they have found that there's been a rise in feelings of helplessness"

Classification: Private practice occupational therapist. Invited to address the psychological impact of load shedding.

**Source Depth Check:**

**(a) FUNDING:** Private practice; no institutional conflict of interest identified.

**(b) MANDATE:** Occupational therapy is relevant to coping strategies and functional impact of stress; it is not a primary discipline for epidemiological mental health research. Karim cites a SADAG study but does not provide its methodology or publication details.



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D1 Conflict of Interest: +1 — No direct financial conflict identified; private practitioner with no apparent institutional agenda.  
 D2 Personal Risk: 0 — Low personal risk; her statements are broadly uncontroversial.  
 D3 Technical Competence: +1 — Occupational therapy is relevant to coping and functional adaptation; less directly relevant to epidemiological mental health claims.  
 D4 Opinion Consistency: 0 — No prior statements available.  
 D5 Emotionalisation vs. Data: +1 — References a specific study (SADAG, 50,000 members); practical coping advice is concrete.  
 D6 Source Level: 0 — Secondary (cites a study without full reference; cannot be independently verified from transcript).  
**TOTAL: +3 → SOURCE TRAFFIC LIGHT: YELLOW**

*Missing Expert Groups:*

- Independent academic energy economist (e.g., UCT Energy Research Centre)
- Eskom technical spokesperson or board representative
- NERSA regulatory expert
- Opposition party energy policy spokesperson

**Source Credibility Overview:**

Source	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	Total	Signal
Prof. Sampson Mamphweli — Head of Energy Secretariat, SANEDI	0	+1	+2	+1	+1	+1	+6	GREEN
Matthew Cruz — Head of Business Intelligence and PR, Home Energy; former Eskom employee (11 years)	-2	+1	+1	0	+1	0	+1	YELLOW
Nazreen Karim — Occupational Therapist	+1	0	+1	0	+1	0	+3	YELLOW

*Summary (Matrix Results):*

- Prof. Mamphweli: GREEN (+6) — Credible technical expert; mild structural state-alignment conflict not disclosed
- Matthew Cruz: YELLOW (+1) — Genuine operational knowledge; undisclosed commercial conflict of interest in advocated solutions
- Nazreen Karim: YELLOW (+3) — Relevant professional; secondary source citation; low conflict



## 2. SOURCE SELECTION

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Claims without primary source = penalty points (rumour check)

### Source 1: Eskom press conference / Khalid Cassim (Eskom interim Group CEO)

Timestamp: 01:48–02:14 — Statement: "we hear from escom's interim group chief executive that in the event of unplanned outages reaches around what 18 000 megawatts then we add risk of stage eight"

**(a) Funding and governance:** Eskom is a state-owned enterprise (SOE) under the Department of Public Enterprises. It is the subject of the programme's central critique.

**(b) Structural conflict of interest:** Eskom has an institutional interest in managing public perception of the crisis — neither overstating risk (which could cause panic) nor understating it (which could undermine calls for emergency funding). Its figures are used as the baseline for the entire programme without independent verification.

**(c) Missing counterpoint:** An independent engineering audit of Eskom's capacity figures would have provided verification. The programme notes Eskom was invited but unavailable — this is a significant gap.

### Source 2: SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group) study

Timestamp: 38:00–38:22 — Statement: "a study that has been done by the South African depression and anxiety group has actually shown that among 50 000 of its members they have found that there's been a rise in feelings of helplessness"

**(a) Funding:** SADAG is an NGO funded by a combination of corporate sponsors, government grants, and individual donations. It has an institutional interest in demonstrating the mental health impact of social crises (relevance maintenance, funding justification).

**(b) Structural conflict:** SADAG's mandate is mental health advocacy; it has an institutional interest in demonstrating that mental health crises are widespread and require professional intervention. The study cited is from its own membership base (50,000 members) — a self-selected sample of people already engaged with mental health services, not a representative population sample.

**(c) Missing counterpoint:** No methodology details are provided; the study is not independently verified; no academic mental health researcher is present to contextualise the findings.

Rumour Check (Penalty Points):

Rumour 1:

Timestamp: 31:28–31:43

Claim: "the people that were put into escom that came across from transnets that were directly appointed by Zuma their focus was also incorrect"

Word marker: "it appears" (31:34) — "the view of and the purpose of being there making the decisions was not so much to help the country a little bit more to increase themselves"

Primary source present: No — This is Cruz's characterisation of Zuma-era appointments; no Zondo Commission citation, no specific names, no documentary evidence cited. +1 penalty point.

Rumour 2:

Timestamp: 33:10–33:26

Claim: "you kind of you hear around and you're making the decisions anti-government during the time that you uh you are meant to make good decisions but now you also hear at the other end"

Word marker: "you hear around" — unattributed, vague sourcing

Primary source present: No — Entirely unattributed. +1 penalty point.



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Adjusted Score with Penalty Points: 5/10 (base 3 + 2 penalty points)

Summary: The programme relies heavily on Eskom's own figures (unavoidable given the subject matter) and a single NGO study with methodological limitations. Matthew Cruz's unattributed characterisations of Zuma-era decision-making constitute rumour-level claims without primary source citation. Source diversity is limited: two state/state-linked sources, one private sector source with undisclosed commercial conflict, and one NGO with institutional interest in its own findings.



### 3. TIME DISTRIBUTION

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Estimated speaking time:

- Prof. Mamphweli (SANEDI/state-linked): approx. 12 minutes (23%)
- Matthew Cruz (private sector/solar industry): approx. 10 minutes (19%)
- Blaine Herman (host): approx. 12 minutes (23%)
- Street interviewees / public voices: approx. 8 minutes (15%)
- Funeral parlour segment (field reporter + "Doc"): approx. 7 minutes (13%)
- Nazreen Karim (occupational therapist): approx. 4 minutes (8%)
- Digital audience members (Lawrence, Nigel, Sipo, Tobekile, Hamilton, Tommy): approx. 5 minutes (10%)

*Note: Percentages exceed 100% due to overlapping/interactive segments; figures are approximate.*

Summary: Time distribution between the two main expert voices (Mamphweli and Cruz) is broadly balanced. The public voice segments (street interviews, digital audience, funeral parlour) constitute a substantial portion of the programme, which is appropriate for a civic engagement format. The absence of any government, opposition, or labour voice means that the time distribution, while internally balanced between the invited guests, reflects a structurally incomplete guest selection rather than deliberate time asymmetry.



#### 4. SELECTIVE OMISSION

6/10

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##### **Omission 1:** No government spokesperson or Eskom representative

**Context:** The programme's central subject is a national infrastructure crisis managed by a state-owned enterprise under government oversight. Eskom was invited but unavailable (35:39–35:44: "we did by the way invite them to the program they weren't available"). No government minister, DMRE official, or Presidency spokesperson was invited as an alternative.

**Relevant at:** Throughout the programme, particularly 31:00–34:42 (Cruz's critique of government decision-making)

**Effect:** The programme presents a one-sided critique of government/Eskom management without any institutional response. The disclosure that Eskom was invited but unavailable partially mitigates this, but the absence of any government voice is a significant structural gap.

##### **Omission 2:** No opposition party energy policy perspective

**Context:** The energy crisis is one of the most politically contested issues in South Africa. The DA, EFF, and MK all have distinct energy policy positions. The EFF is mentioned once, secondhand, by a street interviewee (11:36) in a context of general accountability rather than policy.

**Relevant at:** 31:00–34:42 (policy failure attribution); 49:38–50:31 (solutions discussion)

**Effect:** The absence of opposition voices means the programme's implicit policy framework (state-led remediation, Energy Action Plan, demand-side management) goes unchallenged from a market-right (DA) or radical-left (EFF) perspective.

##### **Omission 3:** Matthew Cruz's commercial conflict of interest

**Context:** Cruz advocates for feed-in tariffs and private solar solutions (49:42–50:31) — the core business model of his employer, Home Energy. This conflict is not disclosed.

**Relevant at:** 49:42–50:31 — "Home Energy is very happy to help any company that..."

**Effect:** Viewers receive what appears to be independent expert policy advice that is in fact a commercially motivated recommendation. The programme ends with what is effectively an undisclosed advertisement for Cruz's employer.

**Summary:** The three most significant omissions are the absence of a government/Eskom response, the absence of opposition party energy policy voices, and the non-disclosure of Cruz's commercial conflict of interest. Together these create a structural imbalance that, while not ideologically driven, systematically disadvantages accountability journalism.

#### **Missing Voices**

- Eskom spokesperson/executive: Would have provided official position on remediation timelines, Stage 8 risk mitigation, and the Energy Action Plan implementation status — directly relevant to the programme's central questions.
- Opposition party energy spokesperson (DA or EFF): Would have provided political accountability framing and alternative policy positions on energy reform.
- NERSA (National Energy Regulator of South Africa) representative: Would have addressed the regulatory framework, tariff decisions, and consumer protection mechanisms.



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- NUM/NUMSA (mining/metalworkers unions) representative: Would have addressed the labour dimension of Eskom's crisis, skills retention, and union positions on privatisation.
- Environmental/just transition expert (e.g., Centre for Environmental Rights): Would have addressed the coal decommissioning timeline, renewable energy rollout, and climate commitments.
- Social welfare/poverty expert (e.g., SASSA, academic): Would have provided evidence-based analysis of load shedding's impact on the poorest households and existing government support mechanisms.
- Municipal official or SALGA representative: Would have addressed the municipal debt crisis and distribution network failures.
- Independent economist: Would have quantified the GDP and employment impact of the energy crisis with data, rather than anecdote.



## 5. NUMERICAL MANIPULATION

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Complete figures include: absolute value, proportion (%) and trend

### Finding 1: EAF figures without trend context

Timestamp: 23:53–25:23

Figure: "the energy available availability Factor deteriorated to 56 in the past Financial year against a target of 60"

Dimensions shown: (a) Absolute value ✓ (56% EAF); (b) Proportion ✓ (against 70% target for adequacy); (c) Trend X — no historical EAF data provided (what was EAF in 2015, 2018, 2020?)

Missing context: The trend dimension is absent. Viewers cannot determine whether 56% represents improvement or deterioration from prior years, which is essential for assessing whether current management is making progress.

Effect: The figure creates an impression of static crisis without enabling viewers to assess trajectory.

### Finding 2: Stage 8 megawatt thresholds presented without demand-side context

Timestamp: 03:34–04:23

Figure: "15 000 megawatts...stage five...16 500 megawatts...stage six...18 000 megawatts...stage eight"

Dimensions shown: (a) Absolute values ✓; (b) Proportion X — no reference to total installed capacity or total demand; (c) Trend X — no historical comparison

Missing context: Without knowing total installed capacity (~44,000 MW nominal) and typical winter demand (~28,000–32,000 MW), the megawatt figures are difficult for a lay audience to contextualise.

Effect: The figures are technically accurate but presented in isolation; the host's subsequent explanation (09:34–10:38) partially addresses this but does not provide the full demand-side picture.

### Finding 3: Vietnam 9,000 MW claim without verification

Timestamp: 49:42–50:17

Figure: "they were able to install 9000 megawatts in six months"

Dimensions shown: (a) Absolute value ✓; (b) Proportion X — no comparison to South Africa's grid size or demand; (c) Trend X — no context on Vietnam's starting point, grid infrastructure, or regulatory environment

Missing context: The claim is presented as a directly applicable model for South Africa without any analysis of the structural differences (grid infrastructure, regulatory environment, financing mechanisms, land availability). No primary source is cited.

Effect: The figure functions as a rhetorical device to make private solar solutions appear straightforwardly achievable, which may be misleading.

Summary: Numerical manipulation is present but not severe. The most significant issue is the consistent absence of trend data, which prevents viewers from assessing whether the crisis is improving or worsening under current management — a politically significant omission.



## 6. GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

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### Association 1: Zuma → state capture → Eskom crisis

Timestamp: 31:10–32:33

Quote: "the many findings coming out about the Zuma presidency and what happened with mudupi and kusile and the decisions that were made there...the view of and the purpose of being there making the decisions was not so much to help the country a little bit more to increase themselves"

**Technique:** Cruz draws a direct causal chain from Zuma's presidency to the current energy crisis, naming Medupi and Kusile as specific examples. This is factually grounded in Zondo Commission findings.

**Effect:** The association is factually defensible (Zondo Commission documented state capture at Eskom) but is presented without nuance — no distinction is made between Zuma personally, the ANC under Zuma, and the broader institutional failures that preceded and postdated his presidency.

### Association 2: "Greedy people" running the country

Timestamp: 12:11–12:15 (street interviewee)

Quote: "so the country is being run by greedy people that's what it is"

**Technique:** Unattributed collective characterisation of government as motivated by greed; presented without challenge or contextualisation by the host.

**Effect:** Mild guilt-by-association framing of the entire government as corrupt; the host does not challenge or contextualise this claim.

Guilt by Association Assessment:

Neither Cruz nor any other speaker is framed as a "conspiracy theorist" in this broadcast. The Zuma-state capture association is factually grounded in Zondo Commission findings and does not constitute improper guilt by association. The "greedy people" street quote is more problematic but is a public voice segment, not editorial framing.

**Summary:** Guilt by association is present at a low level. The Zuma-Eskom causal chain is factually defensible; the "greedy people" characterisation is unchallenged but is a public voice rather than editorial assertion. Score reflects the absence of challenge to the latter.



<b>7. TIMING</b>									<b>3/10</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Finding 1:** Stage 8 fear-framing at programme opening

Position: 00:01–01:41 (opening)

Content: "rolling blackouts highest stages of load shedding on cold winter nights...stage eight it's a possibility this winter...when stage six was a big deal breaking news social media"

Timing Effect: The programme opens with escalating fear language ("cold winter nights," "stage eight," "total darkness") before any technical context is provided. This primes the audience emotionally before the expert analysis begins, making the subsequent technical information more alarming than it might otherwise appear.

**Finding 2:** Commercial pitch placed at programme close

Position: 49:38–50:31 (final segment before closing remarks)

Content: Cruz's Vietnam feed-in tariff advocacy, ending with "Home Energy is very happy to help any company that..."

Timing Effect: The commercial pitch for Cruz's employer is placed at the end of the programme, after his credibility has been established through 20+ minutes of expert commentary. Viewers are most receptive to solutions-framing at the end of a problem-focused programme; the placement maximises the commercial impact of an undisclosed advertisement.

**Finding 3:** Psychological coping segment placed after peak fear content

Position: 37:04–40:35 (after street interviews and funeral parlour segment)

Content: Nazreen Karim's coping strategies segment

Timing Effect: The coping segment is placed after the most emotionally impactful content (street interviews expressing despair, funeral parlour owners describing financial ruin). This sequencing is editorially defensible (problem before solution) but amplifies the emotional impact of the preceding content.

Summary: The most significant timing issue is the placement of Cruz's undisclosed commercial pitch at the programme's close, after his expert credibility has been established. The opening fear-framing is a standard broadcast technique but contributes to emotional priming.



## 8. SELECTIVE OUTRAGE

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Outrage = bias. Selective outrage amplifies the finding. Score = outrage level (0–5) + selectivity (0–5)

*Methodological Principle (v2.2): Before each assessment, the triggering event must be documented. A reaction can only be assessed as selective if comparable triggers from other positions produced no analogous reaction.*

### Finding 1: Unchallenged "greedy people" characterisation

Timestamp: 12:11–12:15

Triggering event: Street interviewee characterises the government as "greedy people"

Reaction: Host does not challenge, contextualise, or follow up on this characterisation; moves directly to the next segment.

Comparison: No comparable characterisation of opposition parties or other actors is made in the programme; therefore asymmetry cannot be fully established — there is no analogous trigger from another direction that received different treatment.

Asymmetry: Partially present — the absence of challenge to a sweeping characterisation of government is notable, but the programme does not present comparable characterisations of other actors that could serve as a control.

Outrage Level: 1/5 (mild; host's non-reaction rather than active outrage)

Selectivity: 1/5 (limited comparator available)

Summary: Selective outrage is not a dominant feature of this programme. The host maintains a broadly neutral, civic tone throughout. The one instance of unchallenged inflammatory language (street interviewee's "greedy people") reflects a failure of editorial challenge rather than selective outrage. Score reflects the low intensity and limited comparator base.



## 9. SELECTIVE OMISSION — OVERALL PICTURE

6/10

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### Finding 1: Absence of government/Eskom institutional response

Timestamp: Throughout (most acute at 31:00–34:42)

Missing perspective/fact: The current ANC government's position on the energy crisis, the Energy Action Plan's implementation status, and Eskom's own assessment of remediation progress.

Relevance: The programme's central question is whether the crisis can be managed; without the institutional voice responsible for managing it, the analysis is structurally incomplete.

Effect: The programme creates an impression of institutional failure without providing the institution an opportunity to respond — a fundamental fairness deficit under BCCSA Clause 18.

### Finding 2: Absence of labour/union perspective

Timestamp: Throughout

Missing perspective/fact: NUM and NUMSA positions on Eskom's workforce, skills retention, and the privatisation/IPP debate.

Relevance: Eskom's operational failures are partly attributed to skills flight and maintenance culture; the labour dimension is entirely absent.

Effect: The programme's technical analysis of maintenance failures is incomplete without the workforce perspective.

### Finding 3: No quantification of economic impact

Timestamp: 12:42–13:02 (street interview); 48:10–49:30 (Tommy's question)

Missing perspective/fact: No economist provides data on the GDP cost of load shedding (estimated at R500 million–R1 billion per day of Stage 6 by various analysts), job losses, or business closure rates.

Relevance: Multiple speakers reference economic damage; no data is provided to quantify it.

Effect: The economic impact discussion remains anecdotal rather than evidence-based, reducing the programme's analytical value.

Summary: The programme's completeness deficit is structural rather than ideological — it reflects the absence of key institutional, labour, and economic voices rather than deliberate suppression of a particular viewpoint. However, the cumulative effect of these absences is a programme that is more effective as a human-interest piece than as a comprehensive public affairs analysis.

### Share of covered perspectives

*Inverted: original value measures coverage (higher = better). Shown as deviation (higher = larger gaps).*

[A] Technical/engineering perspective on Eskom's generation fleet and realistic remediation timelines

[B] **Current ANC government accountability:** what has the Ramaphosa administration done or failed to do since 2018?

[C] **Market-based and private sector solutions:** IPPs, feed-in tariffs, full or partial privatisation of Eskom

[D] **Opposition party perspectives:** DA, EFF, MK positions on energy policy

[E] **Labour/union perspective:** NUM, NUMSA on Eskom workforce, skills, and privatisation concerns



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**[F] Regulatory and legal perspective:** NERSA, energy law, consumer rights, compensation frameworks

**[G] Environmental/just transition perspective:** coal fleet decommissioning, renewable energy, climate commitments

**[H] International comparative perspective:** how other developing countries have solved similar crises

**[I] Social protection perspective:** government support for poor households unable to afford backup power

**[J] Municipal and local government perspective:** role of municipalities in electricity distribution and debt to Eskom

### Assessment: Was Each Perspective Addressed?

**[A] ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 03:34–10:38 — Quote: "when escom takes down units for maintenance and they return them there is no guarantee that those units will give us longevity" — Assessment: Prof. Mamphweli provides substantive technical analysis of the generation fleet, EAF, and maintenance challenges; Matthew Cruz supplements with EAF data. This is the strongest section of the programme.

**[B] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 31:10–33:34 — Quote: "it almost seems like have your cake and eat its kind of situation from my perspective uh when it comes to the governments because you kind of you're there while you're meant to be making the problem not come" — Assessment: Cruz gestures at current government accountability but frames it primarily as a continuation of Zuma-era failures; no direct accountability question is put to a government representative or current ANC official.

**[C] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 49:42–50:30 — Quote: "they were able to install 9000 megawatts in six months...by offering a feed-in tariff to both homeowners and business owners" — Assessment: Cruz raises the Vietnam feed-in tariff model as a viable solution; however, this is presented briefly at the end of the programme without structured debate or challenge.

**[D] OMITTED**

No opposition party spokesperson was invited. The EFF is mentioned once, secondhand, by a street interviewee. DA, MK, and other opposition energy policy positions are entirely absent.

**[E] OMITTED**

No labour or union representative was present. The workforce dimension of Eskom's crisis — skills flight, labour relations, union positions on privatisation — is entirely absent.

**[F] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 43:51–45:17 — Quote: "what we have at the moment is the rebate scheme...government has announced that you can claim up to 25 percent of the total cost of 15 000 rents...unfortunately at this point in time those stocks have stalled" — Assessment: The compensation/legal framework is raised by an audience member and briefly addressed by the professor; no legal or regulatory expert is present.

**[G] PARTIALLY ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 26:00–27:04 — Quote: "we continue with our decommissioning program and decarbonization program going forward" — Assessment: The just transition is mentioned in passing by Prof. Mamphweli but receives no substantive discussion.

**[H] ADDRESSED**

Timestamp: 49:42–50:17 — Quote: "Vietnam...were able to install 9000 megawatts in six months" — Assessment: A single international comparator is offered by Cruz; no broader comparative analysis is provided.



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#### [I] ADDRESSED

Timestamp: 12:16–14:24 (street interviews); 48:10–49:30 (Tommy's question) — Quote: "there are people out there who cannot afford to be ready with load shedding...people in the locations they cannot afford maybe inverters generators" — Assessment: The social inequality dimension is raised repeatedly by public voices; however, no policy expert or social protection specialist addresses it substantively.

#### [J] OMITTED

Municipal electricity distribution, the role of municipalities in the crisis, and the R50+ billion municipal debt to Eskom are mentioned briefly (47:56–48:04) but receive no dedicated analysis or municipal representative.

### Completeness Score: 5/10

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**Justification:** The programme addresses the technical and human-impact dimensions of the crisis competently, and the public voice segments add genuine civic value. However, the absence of opposition party voices, labour/union perspectives, a regulatory/legal expert, and any government spokesperson creates a significant gap. The programme is strongest as a technical explainer and human-interest piece but falls short of the comprehensive public affairs standard required by the Broadcasting Act.



## Soft Facts — 6 qualitative techniques

### 10. FRAMING

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#### Finding 1: Crisis-as-inevitability framing

Timestamp: 01:29–01:41

Quote: "are we becoming numb to Rolling blackouts are we are we normalizing it stage eight it's a possibility this winter"

Manipulation: The host frames Stage 8 as an "underlying possibility" and questions whether society is "normalising" the crisis. This frames the situation as one of passive acceptance rather than active political accountability.

Why problematic: The normalisation framing deflects from accountability questions (who is responsible, what can be done politically) toward psychological adaptation (how do we cope). This is reinforced by the later coping segment with Nazreen Karim.

#### Finding 2: State capture as complete explanatory framework

Timestamp: 07:31–07:52; 31:10–32:33

Quote: "we're paying the school fees for what happened during State capture the corruption that took place the design flaws so many other things that were captured by Justice Raymond"

Manipulation: Both Mamphweli and Cruz use state capture as the primary — and effectively sole — explanatory framework for the energy crisis. This forecloses discussion of post-2018 governance failures, current management accountability, and structural issues predating Zuma.

Why problematic: The state capture frame is factually accurate but incomplete. It functions to exculpate current ANC leadership by attributing all failures to a prior era, without examining what the current government has or has not done in the five years since Zuma's removal.

#### Finding 3: Inequality framing of load shedding impact

Timestamp: 12:16–14:24 (street interviews); 48:10–49:30 (Tommy)

Quote: "those people up there that is the cause of load shedding they got generators at home inverted so it doesn't really make a difference to them"

Manipulation: The programme consistently frames load shedding as a class issue — the wealthy are insulated, the poor suffer. This is factually accurate but is presented as a moral frame rather than a policy analysis.

Why problematic: The inequality framing is legitimate but is not accompanied by any policy analysis of what government is doing (or should do) to address the differential impact. It functions emotionally rather than analytically.

Summary: The dominant framing is crisis-as-legacy-of-state-capture, which is factually grounded but politically convenient for current ANC leadership. The inequality framing adds emotional weight without analytical depth. Together these frames create a programme that is more effective at generating sympathy than at enabling political accountability.



## 11. WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY

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### Finding 1: "The good professor" / "better minds"

Timestamp: 03:02–03:06; 23:25–23:28; 37:02–37:04

Quote: "we have a better mind in studio with us tonight...let's take it to the betterment the professor good professor still with us"

Manipulation: Repeated use of "good professor" and "better minds" as social credentialing language.

Why problematic: This language pre-emptively validates the experts' authority and discourages critical engagement with their positions. Neutral alternative: "Professor Mamphweli, energy expert at SANEDI."

### Finding 2: "Rascals" for power stations

Timestamp: 01:07–01:21

Quote: "it's those Rascals again Camden hendrina Kendall among others acting up again...they do sound like naughty siblings don't they getting into trouble now all of us getting punished"

Manipulation: Anthropomorphising power stations as "rascals" and "naughty siblings" trivialises a national infrastructure crisis.

Why problematic: The language domesticates and infantilises a serious governance failure, reducing political accountability to a family squabble. It is editorially inappropriate for a public affairs programme on a national crisis.

### Finding 3: "Darkness and despair" / "enemy of progress"

Timestamp: 14:28–14:34; 51:25–51:30

Quote: "it's an all too familiar story of darkness and despair right the impact of rolling blackouts palpable in all sectors of society" / "the constant fight against whatever the enemy of progress is"

Manipulation: Emotionally loaded language ("darkness and despair," "enemy of progress") that frames the crisis in apocalyptic terms.

Why problematic: "Enemy of progress" is a vague, politically resonant phrase that implies a deliberate adversary without identifying one — it is simultaneously inflammatory and analytically empty. Neutral alternative: "the ongoing challenges of the energy crisis."

Summary: Word choice issues are primarily in the host's language rather than the experts'. The "rascals/naughty siblings" framing is the most editorially problematic, trivialising a serious governance failure. The credentialing language ("good professor," "better minds") subtly discourages critical engagement with expert claims.



## 12. MODERATION BEHAVIOUR

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*Methodological Principle (v2.2): Before each assessment, the triggering event must be documented. An intervention can only be assessed as asymmetric if comparable triggers from other guests produced no analogous intervention.*

### Finding 1: No challenge to Cruz's unattributed Zuma-era claims

Timestamp: 31:10–33:34

Triggering event: Cruz makes sweeping, unattributed characterisations of Zuma-era decision-making ("making decisions not so much for the betterments of the country...more for the betterments of themselves")

Presenter reaction: "that's that's that's the context important context but is there anything that can be done now" — host accepts the characterisation without challenge and moves to solutions.

Comparison: No comparable unattributed characterisation of current government or other actors is made in the programme; therefore full asymmetry cannot be established. However, the absence of any sourcing challenge is notable.

Asymmetry: Partially present — the host consistently accepts expert claims without sourcing challenges; this is uniform rather than selective, suggesting a general moderation style rather than targeted asymmetry.

### Finding 2: Birthday acknowledgement for Nazreen Karim

Timestamp: 37:12–37:15

Triggering event: Karim joins the programme on her birthday

Presenter reaction: "happy birthday to you nasri from all of us here and it's topical give us hope"

Comparison: No comparable personal acknowledgement is made for other guests.

Asymmetry: Not analytically significant — this is a social courtesy rather than editorial bias; it does not affect the substantive content of the interview.

### Finding 3: Consistent use of "good professor" credentialing

Timestamp: Multiple (03:02, 23:25, 37:02, 50:40)

Triggering event: Each reference to Mamphweli

Presenter reaction: "good professor," "the good professor still with us," "Professor thank you very much indeed"

Comparison: Cruz is referred to as "Matthew" or "Mr Cruz" without equivalent credentialing language.

Asymmetry: Mild — Mamphweli receives more deferential language than Cruz; however, this may reflect the academic/institutional vs. private sector distinction rather than ideological preference.

Summary: Moderation behaviour is broadly consistent and civic in tone. The most significant issue is the absence of sourcing challenges to unattributed claims, which is uniform rather than selective. The credentialing asymmetry between Mamphweli and Cruz is mild and may reflect professional convention rather than editorial bias.



### 13. QUESTION ASYMMETRY

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#### Asymmetry 1: Technical experts vs. public voices

To Prof. Mamphweli, 04:23–04:28: "is it a given from your analysis is it a given that we will experience stage eight this winter" — neutral/technical

To street interviewees, 11:30–14:24: No questions posed; pre-recorded vox pop without follow-up — no challenge possible

Comparison: The expert receives substantive technical questions; public voices are presented as emotional testimony without analytical challenge. This is structurally appropriate for the format but means that emotionally charged claims ("greedy people," "the country is going back to the dark ages") go unchallenged.

#### Asymmetry 2: Solutions question to Cruz only

To Matthew Cruz, 33:37–33:46: "is there anything that can be done now I guess look we we're looking at the near future right this winter can anything be done now to mitigate or to help out or to lessen a stage Beyond five" — solutions-oriented

To Prof. Mamphweli: No equivalent solutions question is posed directly; Mamphweli is asked primarily about causes and technical analysis.

Comparison: Cruz receives the primary solutions question, which allows him to advocate for his employer's commercial interests (feed-in tariffs, private solar) without a comparable opportunity for Mamphweli to offer a state-policy-oriented solutions perspective.

#### Asymmetry 3: No accountability questions to any guest

To all guests: No question of the form "what should the current government be doing differently?" or "what accountability mechanisms exist?" is posed to any expert.

Comparison: The programme asks extensively about causes (state capture) and coping strategies but does not pose direct accountability questions to experts. This is a uniform omission rather than a selective asymmetry.

Summary: Question asymmetry is mild and partly structural (format differences between expert interviews and public voice segments). The most significant issue is that Cruz receives the primary solutions question, enabling an undisclosed commercial pitch, while no accountability questions are posed to any guest.



#### 14. FALSE BALANCE

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#### Finding 1: Two experts presented as equivalent authorities

Timestamp: 23:25–23:43

Construct: "Matthew Cruz is also well equipped to answer some of these questions from home energies ahead of business intelligence and public relations uh Cruz you also Mr cruisey also worked at eskimer stand for for 11 years"

Analysis: Cruz is presented as equivalent in authority to Prof. Mamphweli (a state-appointed energy research head) on the basis of his 11 years at Eskom. His current role is in business intelligence and PR for a private solar company — a fundamentally different credential. The programme does not distinguish between these different types of expertise or disclose Cruz's commercial conflict of interest.

This is a mild false balance: Cruz is not unqualified, but his authority is overstated relative to Mamphweli's, and his commercial interest in the solutions he advocates is not disclosed.

Summary: False balance is not a dominant feature of this programme. The one instance identified is the equivalencing of Cruz's private sector/commercial expertise with Mamphweli's state research authority, without disclosure of Cruz's conflict of interest.



## 15. AGENDA-SETTING

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### Finding 1: State capture as the settled explanatory framework

Set agenda element: The energy crisis is caused by state capture under Zuma; current management is dealing with legacy issues.

Timestamp: 07:31–07:52 — Evidence: "we're paying the school fees for what happened during State capture"

Alternative agenda: Current ANC government accountability for the five years since Zuma's removal; structural issues in Eskom's governance model that predate and postdate state capture; the role of the current Minister of Electricity.

### Finding 2: Individual coping as the primary response framework

Set agenda element: The appropriate response to load shedding is individual planning and psychological adaptation.

Timestamp: 39:06–40:35 — Evidence: "it all comes down to planning and structure...checking the shadow of load shedding and making sure that your devices are charged"

Alternative agenda: Collective political action, consumer rights, legal remedies, organised civil society responses, political accountability mechanisms.

### Finding 3: Private solar as the self-evident solution

Set agenda element: Feed-in tariffs and private solar installation are presented as the obvious, achievable solution.

Timestamp: 49:42–50:31 — Evidence: "the USC was a developing country that's shown us the solution...Vietnam...9000 megawatts in six months"

Alternative agenda: Full or partial privatisation of Eskom; nuclear energy; regional power pool integration (SAPP); demand-side management at industrial scale; the DA's energy policy; the EFF's nationalisation-based approach.

Summary: The programme's agenda-setting is its most significant bias vector. By treating state capture as the settled explanatory framework, individual coping as the primary response, and private solar as the obvious solution, the programme forecloses a range of politically significant alternatives — including current government accountability, collective political action, and the full spectrum of energy policy options.



## CHAPTER 4 — OVERALL EVALUATION

### Results

- HARD FACTS SCORE (Average Criteria 1–9): 3.8 / 10
- SOFT FACTS SCORE (Average Criteria 10–15): 3.3 / 10

### Dominant Techniques

- 1. Agenda-Setting (Score 5):** The programme treats state capture as the settled explanatory framework for the energy crisis, individual coping as the primary response, and private solar as the obvious solution. This forecloses current government accountability, collective political action, and the full spectrum of energy policy alternatives — including opposition party positions that represent 24% of the electorate.
- 2. Selective Omission (Score 6):** The absence of a government/Eskom institutional response, opposition party energy policy voices, and disclosure of Cruz's commercial conflict of interest are the three most significant structural gaps. Together they create a programme that is more effective as a human-interest piece than as a comprehensive public affairs analysis meeting the Broadcasting Act standard.
- 3. Framing (Score 4):** The state-capture-as-complete-explanation frame is factually grounded but politically convenient for current ANC leadership, as it attributes all failures to a prior era without examining post-2018 governance accountability. The individual-coping frame deflects from political accountability toward psychological adaptation.

### Core Messages of the Programme

**\*\*MESSAGE 1 (CONTENT):** \*\* "The energy crisis is the direct result of state capture under Zuma, and current management is doing its best to deal with an inherited catastrophe."

**Technique:** State capture framing (Mamphweli 07:31; Cruz 31:10–32:33); absence of current government accountability questions — Evidence: 07:31, 31:10

**\*\*MESSAGE 2 (PERSONAL):** \*\* "Ordinary South Africans — especially the poor — are suffering disproportionately and have no viable individual solutions available to them."

**Technique:** Inequality framing through street interviews and funeral parlour segment; emotional testimony without policy analysis — Evidence: 12:16, 15:48, 48:10

**\*\*MESSAGE 3 (SOCIETAL):** \*\* "The solution lies in private sector innovation (feed-in tariffs, solar) and individual planning, not in collective political action or government intervention."

**Technique:** Agenda-setting through Cruz's solutions advocacy; Karim's individual coping framework; absence of collective/political response options — Evidence: 39:06, 49:42

### Manipulation Level Classification

Justification: The programme scores 3.6/10, placing it in the "slight tendency" category. The bias is structural rather than ideological: it derives primarily from guest selection gaps (no government, opposition, or labour voices), an undisclosed commercial conflict of interest (Cruz/Home Energy), and a dominant framing that exculpates current ANC leadership by attributing all failures to the Zuma era. The programme does not engage in active disinformation or deliberate partisan advocacy. Under Broadcasting Act s. 6 and BCCSA Clause 18, the absence of opposing views on the contested question of current government accountability — a matter of clear public importance — constitutes a measurable departure from the impartiality standard, though not a severe one.

### CONCLUSION

"It's Topical" on load shedding is a competent, civic-minded public affairs programme that provides genuine technical value through Prof. Mamphweli's analysis and genuine human value through its public voice segments. However, it falls short of the Broadcasting Act s. 6 standard of impartiality in three measurable respects: first, the absence of any government or Eskom institutional response to the programme's central accountability questions; second, the non-disclosure of Matthew Cruz's commercial conflict of interest in the policy solutions he advocates; and third, the adoption of a state-capture explanatory frame that, while factually grounded, functions to exculpate current ANC



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leadership without subjecting it to equivalent scrutiny. These deficits are structural rather than ideological — they reflect editorial choices about guest selection and framing rather than deliberate partisan advocacy — but they are nonetheless inconsistent with the BCCSA Code's requirement (Clause 18) that opposing views be presented on controversial matters of public importance. A programme examining a national infrastructure crisis of this magnitude, without a single government spokesperson, opposition party voice, or labour representative, does not meet the standard of comprehensive public affairs journalism required of the national public broadcaster.



## OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE 15 CRITERIA

### Individual Scores — All 15 Criteria

No.	Criterion	Score	Rating
1	EXPERT SELECTION	4/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
2	SOURCE SELECTION	5/10	<i>Significant imbalance</i>
3	TIME DISTRIBUTION	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
4	SELECTIVE OMISSION	6/10	<i>Significant imbalance</i>
5	NUMERICAL MANIPULATION	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
6	GUILT BY ASSOCIATION	2/10	<i>Unremarkable</i>
7	TIMING	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
8	SELECTIVE OUTRAGE	2/10	<i>Unremarkable</i>
9	SELECTIVE OMISSION — OVERALL PICTURE	6/10	<i>Significant imbalance</i>
10	FRAMING	4/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
11	WORD CHOICE AND TERMINOLOGY	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
12	MODERATION BEHAVIOUR	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
13	QUESTION ASYMMETRY	3/10	<i>Slight imbalance</i>
14	FALSE BALANCE	2/10	<i>Unremarkable</i>
15	AGENDA-SETTING	5/10	<i>Significant imbalance</i>

#### HARD FACTS SCORE (1-8)

**3.8/10**

*Slight imbalance*

#### SOFT FACTS SCORE (9-14)

**3.3/10**

*Slight imbalance*

#### OVERALL SCORE

**3.6/10**

*Slight imbalance*

*Average of Hardfacts and Softfacts*



## KEY — Score Definitions

### Individual Scores per Criterion (0–10)

<b>0</b>	<b>No finding</b>	No relevant anomaly detected.
<b>1–2</b>	<b>Weak finding</b>	Minor anomaly without substantial impact on balance.
<b>3–4</b>	<b>Slight to moderate finding</b>	Recognizable tendency; low to moderate impact relevance.
<b>5</b>	<b>Moderate finding with impact</b>	Relevant imbalance affecting the audience's opinion-forming potential.
<b>6</b>	<b>Significant finding (threshold)</b>	Scores of 6 and above are classified as 'significant findings.'
<b>7</b>	<b>Significant finding</b>	Clear, well-documented imbalance with distinct impact relevance.
<b>8–9</b>	<b>Severe finding</b>	Pronounced imbalance; multiple documented individual findings in this criterion.
<b>10</b>	<b>Maximum severity</b>	Systematic, pervasive imbalance in this criterion.

### Aggregated Deviation Index — Interpretation Ranges

<b>0.0 – 2.5</b>	<b>Unremarkable</b>	No significant patterns detected; broadcast meets the impartiality standard.
<b>2.6 – 4.0</b>	<b>Slight imbalance</b>	Isolated anomalies; statistically visible but within tolerance range.
<b>4.1 – 6.0</b>	<b>Significant imbalance</b>	Multiple significant findings; relevant impairment of perspective diversity.
<b>6.1 – 8.0</b>	<b>Serious deviation from the impartiality standard. High degree of deviation</b>	Pronounced, cross-broadcast patterns; high impact relevance.
<b>8.1 – 10</b>	<b>Fundamental systemic one-sidedness. Very high bias degree</b>	Maximum severity across nearly all criteria; systematically one-sided reporting.

### Party-Political Bias (-5 to +5)

<b>-5 to -3</b>	<b>Strongly disadvantaged</b>	Party is significantly underrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.
<b>-2 to -1</b>	<b>Slightly disadvantaged</b>	Recognizable but minor disadvantage.
<b>0</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	No detectable favoritism or disadvantage.
<b>+1 to +2</b>	<b>Slightly favored</b>	Recognizable but minor favoritism.
<b>+3 to +5</b>	<b>Strongly favored</b>	Party is significantly overrepresented in framing, airtime, or presentation.



## CHAPTER 5 — LEGAL CLASSIFICATION (Broadcasting Act s. 6)

### Assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 6

Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999, Section 6 (SABC Charter) requires significant news and public affairs programming that meets the highest standards of journalism, including fairness, accuracy, and impartiality. BCCSA Code Clause 16 requires news to be reported truthfully, accurately, and fairly, in the correct context and in a balanced manner. Clause 18 requires opposing views to be presented on controversial issues of public importance.

#### Violation 1:

Standard: BCCSA Code Clause 18 — Opposing views on controversial issues of public importance

Offence: The programme examines the causes and management of South Africa's energy crisis — a matter of the highest public importance — without presenting any view from the government, Eskom, or any opposition party. The programme notes that Eskom was invited but unavailable (35:39–35:44: "we did by the way invite them to the program they weren't available") but makes no equivalent disclosure regarding the absence of opposition party voices or government ministerial representation.

Evidence: Timestamp 31:10–33:34 — Cruz: "the people that were making the decisions and were near the top were making decisions not so much for the betterments of the country it appears but more for the betterments of themselves and theirs with the many findings coming out about the Zuma presidency" — This substantive attribution of blame for a national crisis is presented without any institutional response.

Assessment: The absence of a government or Eskom response to direct accountability claims constitutes a failure to present opposing views on a controversial matter of public importance, in breach of BCCSA Clause 18. The disclosure that Eskom was invited but unavailable partially mitigates this finding but does not eliminate it, as no alternative government voice was sought.

#### Violation 2:

Standard: BCCSA Code Clause 16 — Correct context and balanced manner; Broadcasting Act s. 6 — impartiality

Offence: Matthew Cruz is presented as an independent expert ("well equipped to answer some of these questions") without disclosure of his employer's (Home Energy) direct commercial interest in the policy solutions he advocates (feed-in tariffs, private solar installation). His closing statement — "Home Energy is very happy to help any company that..." (50:28–50:31) — constitutes an undisclosed commercial pitch embedded in expert commentary on a public affairs programme.

Evidence: Timestamp 49:42–50:31 — Cruz: "the USC was a developing country that's shown us the solution they were able to install 9000 megawatts in six months...Home Energy is very happy to help any company that Matthew thank you very much indeed" — The commercial pitch is cut off by the host but is audible.

Assessment: Presenting a commercially interested party as a neutral expert, without disclosure of the conflict of interest, fails the "correct context" requirement of BCCSA Clause 16 and the impartiality standard of Broadcasting Act s. 6. Viewers are entitled to know when expert commentary is provided by a party with a direct financial interest in the policy outcomes being discussed.

#### Violation 3:

Standard: BCCSA Code Clause 16 — Truthful, accurate, and fair reporting in correct context

Offence: The programme presents the state capture explanatory framework as the settled, complete account of the energy crisis without contextualising it within the broader governance failures of the post-2018 period. The claim that "the current management and the current board they're basically dealing with Legacy issues" (08:17–08:22) is presented as expert consensus without challenge or counterpoint.

Evidence: Timestamp 08:17–08:22 — Mamphweli: "the current management and and the current board they're basically dealing with Legacy issues" — This exculpatory framing of current Eskom management is presented without any accountability question regarding what the current board has done in the five years since Zuma's removal.



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Assessment: While the state capture legacy is factually documented, presenting it as a complete and sufficient explanation for the current crisis — without examining current management accountability — fails the "correct context" requirement of BCCSA Clause 16. A balanced programme would have subjected current management to equivalent scrutiny.

### **Overall Assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 6**

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The programme does not meet the Broadcasting Act s. 6 standard of impartiality and the BCCSA Code's requirements of balance and correct context in three measurable respects: the absence of opposing institutional views on accountability claims (Clause 18); the non-disclosure of a guest's commercial conflict of interest (Clause 16); and the adoption of an exculpatory framing of current management without counterpoint (Clause 16). These violations are structural rather than deliberate — they reflect editorial choices about guest selection and framing rather than active disinformation — and their cumulative effect is a programme that scores 3.6/10 on the bias scale, placing it in the "slight tendency" category. The violations are remediable through standard editorial corrections: inviting a government spokesperson, disclosing Cruz's employer and commercial interest, and posing direct accountability questions to expert guests. They do not, on the evidence of this single programme, constitute the systematic editorial capture that characterised the Motsoeneng era, but they are inconsistent with the highest standards of journalism required of the national public broadcaster under the Broadcasting Act.



## CHAPTER 6 — Source Depth Check

### 1. SANEDI (South African National Energy Development Institute)

- FUNDING:** Schedule 3A public entity; primary funding from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and National Treasury; supplementary funding from international development partners (GEF, EU) for specific programmes.
- MANDATE:** "To research, develop and demonstrate new and renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies" — compatible with technical analysis of the generation crisis; structurally aligned with government energy policy (IRP 2019).
- CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** SANEDI's mandate is defined by and accountable to the DMRE; its assessments are structurally aligned with government energy policy. It has an institutional interest in validating the IRP 2019 framework rather than critiquing it fundamentally. It does not have a direct financial interest in any particular commercial outcome.
- CREDIBILITY MATRIX:** D1 Conflict of Interest: 0 / D2 Personal Risk: +1 / D3 Technical Competence: +2 / D4 Consistency: +1 / D5 Emotion vs. Data: +1 / D6 Source Level: +1 → TOTAL: +6 → GREEN
- COUNTERVOICE:** UCT Energy Research Centre, CSIR Energy Centre, or independent academic energy economists would provide an independent check on SANEDI's assessments. None are present in the programme.

### 2. Home Energy (Matthew Cruz's employer)

- FUNDING:** Private company; revenue from solar installation, energy solutions, and business intelligence services. Directly dependent on the growth of the private solar market in South Africa.
- MANDATE:** Commercial — to sell solar and energy solutions to homeowners and businesses. Incompatible with neutral policy analysis on energy solutions.
- CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Direct and material. Cruz advocates for feed-in tariffs and private solar installation — the core business model of his employer. His policy recommendations are simultaneously commercial pitches. This conflict is not disclosed in the programme.
- CREDIBILITY MATRIX:** D1 Conflict of Interest: -2 / D2 Personal Risk: +1 / D3 Technical Competence: +1 / D4 Consistency: 0 / D5 Emotion vs. Data: +1 / D6 Source Level: 0 → TOTAL: +1 → YELLOW
- COUNTERVOICE:** An independent energy economist, an Eskom technical representative, or a NERSA official would have provided a counterpoint to Cruz's commercially motivated policy advocacy. None are present.

### 3. SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group)

- FUNDING:** NGO; funded by corporate sponsors (pharmaceutical companies, financial services), government grants, and individual donations. Pharmaceutical industry funding creates a structural interest in medicalising mental health responses.
- MANDATE:** Mental health advocacy and support services. Has an institutional interest in demonstrating the prevalence and severity of mental health challenges (relevance maintenance, funding justification).
- CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Moderate. SADAG's study is based on its own membership (50,000 members) — a self-selected sample of people already engaged with mental health services, not a representative population sample. The study's findings (rise in helplessness, anxiety, depression) are consistent with SADAG's institutional interest in demonstrating widespread mental health need.
- CREDIBILITY MATRIX:** D1 Conflict of Interest: -1 / D2 Personal Risk: 0 / D3 Technical Competence: +1 / D4 Consistency: +1 / D5 Emotion vs. Data: 0 / D6 Source Level: -1 → TOTAL: 0 → YELLOW
- COUNTERVOICE:** An independent academic mental health researcher (e.g., from a university psychology department) would have provided methodological context for the SADAG study. The study's self-selected sample base is not disclosed to viewers.

*IMPORTANT NOTE: "Recognised" or "well-equipped" are social attributions, not factual qualifications. All expert credibility assessments in this analysis are based on the six-dimension credibility matrix, not on the programme's own framing of its guests.*



*Analysis completed under Version 3.0-detail methodology. All timestamps are approximate, derived from transcript line numbers. All direct quotations are in the original broadcast language (English). This analysis is prepared for evidentiary purposes and may be cited in regulatory proceedings before the BCCSA or any competent court.*

## Legal and Methodological Notes

### No factual determination

The results presented do not constitute factual determinations about individual persons, editorial teams, or broadcasts. They are the product of a standardized operationalization, not a finding of individual responsibility.

### No legal judgment

The aggregated deviation index does not replace a legal assessment under Broadcasting Act s. 6. The determination of whether a specific broadcast violates legal requirements is exclusively the responsibility of the competent authorities (in particular BCCSA).

### No proof of causation

Statistical correlations are not to be interpreted as proof of causal relationships or editorial intent. Deviation values may be influenced by topic selection, news environment, political controversy, or format logic.

### No judgment of intent

The analysis measures observable structural characteristics of broadcasts. A score of 7 means a significant imbalance was detected — not that the editorial team intended it. The methodology makes no claims about motives or strategic objectives.

### Heuristic comparison tool

The index serves comparative pattern recognition across thousands of broadcasts, not precise metric measurement of individual segments. Threshold values serve heuristic orientation, not sharp legal qualification.



## APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL BROADCASTING LAW

### South Africa — Legal Framework for Broadcasting Impartiality

#### Primary Legislation

##### Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 (as amended)

The Broadcasting Act establishes the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) as a public broadcaster and defines its Charter obligations.

Section 6 — Charter of the Corporation:

The SABC Charter mandates that the public broadcaster must:

- Provide programming that reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity
- Offer a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis
- Provide significant news and public affairs programming that meets the highest standards of journalism, including fairness, accuracy, and impartiality

Section 10 — Editorial Independence:

The SABC's news and current affairs programming must be independent from government or political party influence. The Board must ensure editorial policies that safeguard journalistic integrity.

##### ICASA Act 13 of 2000

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is the regulatory body responsible for broadcasting licensing and compliance.

##### Electronic Communications Act 36 of 2005

Provides the overarching regulatory framework for electronic communications, including broadcasting standards.

##### BCCSA Broadcasting Code of Conduct

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) enforces the Free-to-Air Broadcasting Code of Conduct, which includes:

Clause 16 — News:

- News must be reported truthfully, accurately and fairly
- News must be presented in the correct context and in a balanced manner
- Only verified facts may be presented as facts; opinions must be clearly identified as such

Clause 17 — Comment:

- Comment must be clearly distinguished from fact
- Comment must be an honest expression of opinion and must be presented fairly

Clause 18 — Controversial Issues of Public Importance:

- When a programme deals with a controversial issue of public importance, opposing views must be presented, either within the same programme or in a follow-up programme within a reasonable time
- This requirement applies to all broadcasting services

Clause 20 — Elections:

- During election periods, broadcasters must ensure equitable treatment of all political parties
- ICASA issues specific election broadcasting regulations

#### Regulatory / Complaints Bodies

Body	Role	Binding?
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**President:** Schläpfer, David - **Contact:** [kontakt@SVFAB.ch](mailto:kontakt@SVFAB.ch) - **Address:** SVFAB, Postfach, CH-8021 Zurich 1



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ICASA (Independent Communications Authority of South Africa)	Licensing, spectrum, compliance enforcement	Yes — can fine, revoke licences
BCCSA (Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa)	Content complaints (bias, fairness, accuracy)	Yes — can reprimand, fine, require corrections
SABC Board	Internal editorial oversight	Internal
Parliament Portfolio Committee on Communications	Political oversight of SABC	Indirect

### Notable Enforcement

- May 2024: ICASA fined SABC R500,000 for refusing to broadcast the Democratic Alliance's election advertisement showing a burning South African flag, ruling that SABC violated the right to free political communication.
- 2016: Western Cape High Court ordered removal of COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng for systematic censorship and political interference at SABC.
- 2017: Labour Court ruled that dismissal of the "SABC 8" journalists (who protested censorship of protest footage) was unlawful.

### Equivalent to Other Countries

Country	Law	South African Equivalent
CH	Art. 4 RTVG	Broadcasting Act s. 6 (SABC Charter)
SE	Radio- och TV-lagen 5 kap.	BCCSA Code Cl. 16-18
DE	MStV §26	ICASA Act + BCCSA Code
NO	NRK-vedtektene §6	Broadcasting Act s. 10 (Editorial Independence)



## APPENDIX 2: SCIENTIFIC REFERENCES

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### SVFAB Working Papers

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- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Measuring Editorial Noise: A Retrospective Suppression Index for Public Broadcasting Content Analysis. [SSRN 6733280](#)
- Schläpfer, D. (2026). Source Traffic Light: A Six-Dimensional Credibility Framework for Systematic Source Assessment in Public Service Media. [SSRN 6733880](#)

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This analysis exposes the system – factual, precise, without polemics. Procedures, personnel, powers, costs, statistics, legal recourse. And the constitutional review showing: the UBI system meets none of the three fundamental criteria – it is not proportionate, not separated by powers, not market-based.

The authority supposed to protect citizens primarily protects the system it should be overseeing.

Essential reading for anyone considering a complaint – and for anyone who wants to understand why genuine media oversight in Switzerland is still pending.