

5 June 2023

AFROX MEDIA RELEASE:

Port Elizabeth ASU down due to power outages

AFROX has been in urgent talks with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) after a power supply failure shut down the Port Elizabeth Air Separation Unit (ASU), which supplies vital Medical Oxygen to hospitals and clinics and industrial gases to key businesses across the in the Eastern Cape, including the vital motor manufacturing industry.

The NMBM is responsible for power supplies to the Coega Development Zone, where the Afrox ASU is situated. Since the explosion of the Recruitment substation on 11 March 2023, the NMBM provided an alternative power supply to Afrox and other affected CDZ tenants.

On the 25 May 2023 a power interruption was experienced at the Afrox plant. The cause was communicated as a faulty joint on the supply cable. Repairs were completed on 28 May 2023 upon which power was reinstated. However, Afrox could not successfully start the plant due to an undervoltage fault. The cable was retested but could not yield satisfactory results. The cable was repaired again at the same joint on the 31 May 2023, but the Afrox plant could not be started successfully due to a persisting undervoltage fault. Afrox reached out to the Nelson Mandela Bay Electrical department as well as the CDZ but has yet to determine how long this work will take or when it will start.

“Afrox learned of the low voltage issue in the cable last week,” said Nolundi Rawana, Afrox. “During this time, we have supplied our PE customers out of the local storage tanks or sourced product from other suppliers in the region. “Unfortunately, these alternative suppliers have advised they can no longer supply Afrox. This will have ongoing ramifications for critical healthcare customers, onsite equipment safety and safe handling and storage operations and we have been forced to declare strict force majeure measures even if customers can source product themselves.”

EDITOR NOTES:

About Afrox: African Oxygen (Afrox) is a supplier of gases and welding products in Sub Saharan Africa. Afrox was founded in 1927 and has prospered by constantly meeting the needs of customers and developing solutions that add value to customers’ applications. Our parent company, Linde plc, is a global gases, engineering, and technology company. At Afrox, we believe technology holds the key to operating safely, protecting the environment and delivering unique solutions for our customers’ requirements. Manufacturing of our gas and other products takes place on 41 different sites throughout southern Africa, comprising 31 units and 16 onsites, with some manufacturing sites hosting more than one unit. We continue to energise our efforts to introduce new equipment, design and manufacturing techniques and exploit cutting-edge technologies and research available as a member of Linde plc. www.afrox.com

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