

Decisions being made on nuclear procurement

The Department of Energy says government will decide on which procurement method will be used to buy 9,600MW of nuclear power from Russia.



The Department of Energy's Zizamele Mbambo says that the procurement process for nuclear power will be transparent and open to public scrutiny. Image: Department of Energy

"There will be a procurement process and the work that the department is doing is preparation for that," said Zizamele Mbambo, Deputy Director-General (DDG) for Nuclear Energy at the Department of Energy.

South Africa recently signed with Russia an Intergovernmental Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Cooperation in Nuclear Energy and Industry.

The agreement lays the foundation for the large-scale nuclear power plants (NPP) procurement and development programme for South Africa. This will be based on the construction of new nuclear power plants using Russia's VVER reactors.

"We've highlighted that various models exist in the international space of the procurement process and South Africa would review all these and choose whichever procurement process it decides to implement the nuclear programme. That decision will be made in the

future," said Mbambo.

Internationally, various procurement models are used and these are determined by the way in which countries want to roll out their nuclear programmes.

Options being considered

"Government will make a decision in the national interest," said Mbambo, adding that the procurement process had not started.

South Africa has a number of nuclear agreements with several countries, including Russia and the US and is SA is set to sign a further agreement with France this month.

The department's Acting Director-General, Dr Wolsey Barnard, said that no information relevant to the public about South Africa's nuclear build will be withheld.

South Africa's nuclear energy policy was approved in 2008 and was further enhanced by the approval of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), which stipulates that nuclear power will form part of the country's energy mix to a level of 9,600MW.

"Some of the key elements of the policy revolve around the fact that South Africa wanting to be self-sufficient in its energy generation. We want to be able to use nuclear technology and the entire programme involves training, skills development and job creation," said Mbambo.

Asked how long will the procurement process take, Mbambo said that this will depend on the type of model that government approves.

South Africa currently generates 5% of its electricity from nuclear power through the Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant in the Western Cape.



South Africa's Koeberg nuclear power station is the only nuclear generation plant on the continent. Now the Department of Energy plans to build another plant to provide South Africa with additional electricity generation capacity. Image: [Melkbos](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>