

# MEDIA STATEMENT

## City Power Urges Community Vigilance Amid Rising Infrastructure Theft

 31 January 2026

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City Power is appealing to residents and businesses to play an active role in protecting critical electricity infrastructure following a sustained increase in theft and vandalism incidents recorded during January 2026. These incidents continue to pose a serious risk to power supply stability, public safety and the delivery of essential services across our supply areas.

Since the beginning of January 2026, we have recorded 112 infrastructure-related incidents across City Power's Service Delivery Centres. The highest number was recorded in Reuven SDC with 26 incidents, followed by Roodepoort SDC with 20, Randburg and Alexandra SDCs with 16 incidents each, Lenasia SDC with 15 incidents, Hursthill SDC with 5, and Midrand SDC with 2 incidents. Of particular concern is the Inner City SDC, which recorded 12 incidents, many of which occurred repeatedly within underground tunnels.

During this period, coordinated operations between City Power and law enforcement have led to the arrest of 18 suspects linked to infrastructure-related crimes.

While infrastructure theft remains a citywide challenge, the recurring unauthorised access and criminal activity within Inner City underground tunnels has emerged as a critical operational and safety issue. These tunnels house essential electricity cables and network components that supply power to the city's commercial hub, residential buildings, transport corridors and key services. Repeated intrusions into these confined spaces increase the risk of extended outages, equipment damage and serious injury or loss of life.

In the most recent incident at a Central Substation in the Inner City, patrol teams conducting routine tunnel sweeps discovered copper cables had been deliberately cut and removed. Tools commonly associated with infrastructure theft were also found at the scene, indicating organised and premeditated criminal activity. Such actions are extremely dangerous, particularly where live electrical equipment is involved, and place the surrounding community at significant risk.

The ongoing theft and vandalism of electricity infrastructure, often linked to organised criminal networks, continues to strain City Power's operational capacity.

These crimes result in unplanned power interruptions, damage to critical equipment such as transformers and switchgear, and the diversion of millions of rands from planned maintenance and network upgrades to emergency repairs. The broader impact is felt by households, businesses, healthcare facilities, transport systems and water services.

City Power is calling for increased visibility and patrols by law enforcement agencies, both on the surface and within underground infrastructure corridors, particularly in the Inner City, as well as to increase raids and compliance operations at scrap metal dealers by the Economic Infrastructure Task Teams (EITTs) established by the President, as these outlets remain a critical link in the infrastructure theft value chain.

Although City Power has intensified its security interventions through increased patrols, improved surveillance, infrastructure hardening and closer collaboration with law enforcement agencies and community policing forums. However, community vigilance remains one of the most effective deterrents against infrastructure-related crime.

Residents are urged to immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity near substations, tunnels or other essential infrastructure. This includes unauthorised access to restricted areas, individuals tampering with electrical equipment, open or damaged access points, or people carrying cables or cutting tools in these environments.

City Power emphasises that electricity infrastructure is a shared public asset, and safeguarding it requires a collective effort. Community awareness and cooperation are critical in ensuring a reliable power supply and a safer city for all. Residents are encouraged to call our Security Risk Management Control Room on 011 490 7900 / 7911 / 7553 or via WhatsApp 083 579 4497.

**ENDS**

**ISSUED BY CITY POWER**

**Isaac Mangena, General Manager**

**Department of Public Relations and Communications**