

# MEDIA STATEMENT

**Executive Mayor and City Power COO provide update on New Doornfontein building incident and power restoration efforts**

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The Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Cllr Dada Morero, today visited the site of the building explosion in New Doornfontein as part of the City's High Impact Accelerated Service Delivery operation in the Inner City.

The visit followed ongoing investigations into the incident, which affected the power supply in parts of New Doornfontein supplied from the Siemert Substation. The Executive Mayor was accompanied by senior City leadership, including City Power Chief Operating Officer, Charles Tlouane, who provided details on City Power's assessment of the electricity infrastructure at the affected building.

Executive Mayor Cllr Dada Morero reaffirmed the City's commitment to safety, accountability and sustainable service delivery.

"We will not compromise on safety, and we will continue to enforce compliance to protect infrastructure and ensure the sustainability of essential services in the Inner City," said Cllr Morero.

Briefing the Executive Mayor on site, Tlouane outlined the technical findings based on City Power's inspection and operational experience.

"Under the current conditions, we noticed that the ground-mounted transformer inside the building is intact and has not exploded. This is a transformer with oil inside, and there was no failure and no oil expelled during this incident. The transformer also remains in its original position," said Tlouane.

He explained that, based on City Power's technical and industrial experience, the evidence does not support a transformer-related explosion.

"Based on our electrical experience, we do not believe that this transformer could have caused the explosion, and threw debris so many meters away, breaking even windows of adjacent buildings. Under normal circumstances, when a transformer fails, the fire is localised and is accompanied by oil spillage. In this case, there is no such evidence," Tlouane added.

During the inspection, technical teams identified other items in the immediate vicinity of the transformer that are relevant to the ongoing investigation, and the overall condition of the transformer and surrounding evidence indicates that another factor may have contributed to the scale of the incident.

“Behind the transformer, we found tanks located on site. We also found a generator next to the ground-mounted transformer, as well as a tanker and several pumps and pipes for different purposes. At this stage, we do not know what the tanker and cylinders are used for or what kind of liquid they contained, only signage written “flammable liquid”. All the evidence found here indicates that this was not a transformer-related incident. It tells us that something else amplified the explosion. Whether it was any form of spark or another source, that is what the investigation will determine”, said Tlouane.

At the Siemert Substation, Sivewright North Distributor, power supply has been restored to approximately 95% of customers in New Doornfontein after the explosion. The outage affecting the remaining customers in Lower Rose Street is due to a Medium Voltage Chamber (MVC) that was damaged as a result of the same explosion.

Once the rubble has been cleared, the Department of Labour has granted clearance, and the site is confirmed to be safe to access, City Power teams will proceed with the installation of the required equipment and anticipate completing the work within four to five working days, should all go according to plan. This is also dependent on the building owners finalising their reconstruction, installing internal reticulation, and presenting us with a certificate of compliance (COC)

Meanwhile, during the operation in the Inner City, audits at several buildings were conducted to address infrastructure, compliance and revenue challenges.

These include a building on Sophie de Bruyn Street in Joubert Park, which was found to owe approximately R2 million in outstanding electricity charges, and a Level 2 disconnection was implemented due to non-payment and the absence of a payment arrangement. A block of flats at the corner of King George and De Villiers Streets in Joubert was also audited and found to owe a combined total of approximately R2.23 million across two electricity meters, resulting in a Level 2 disconnection at the point of supply.

City Power will continue to provide updates as investigations progress and restoration work advances.

**ENDS**

**ISSUED BY CITY POWER**

**Isaac Mangena, General Manager**

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