

POWER SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC – MESSAGE FROM CBF

Over the past week or so SBAA and BFC staff have been working tirelessly to try to minimise the impact of last weeks tragic accident whilst doing as much as we can to contribute towards the energy efficiency that must take place. Through these efforts my main priority – maintaining our operational outputs – has been achieved and it will continue to be achieved. I am nevertheless conscious that there is an inescapable burden on us all. The following might not reduce the impact but I hope it will explain the situation as I currently see it.

Members of my staff met earlier today with the Energy Authority of the Republic to try and get a better idea of the scale of the problem, to see what we can do to contribute towards the Republic's energy efficiency requirements, and how we could minimise the impact on ourselves. The accident last week took out the Republic's main power generating capability leaving it with only aged, stand by equipment. This equipment is capable of delivering less than 70% of the Republic's energy needs which is why a programme of power cuts has been necessary to regulate demand and take some strain off the equipment. Although the Republic has taken several measures to increase the generating capabilities, it is now clear that there is a continued need for the cuts and my assessment is that we should expect them for the immediate future.

In an effort to minimise the impact, the Energy Authority has agreed to try and programme our cuts for the same time each day. Whilst there was never going to be a "good time" for this, we have been allocated a schedule of between 0800 hours and 1100 hours each day, starting from tomorrow, 20 July. This will ensure that we have power during the hottest periods of the day, it will reduce the strain on our own stand by generators, and provides a balance between operational and welfare requirements. It should, I hope, allow us to plan our lives in a more structured way. I must stress though that there can be no guarantees that additional cuts won't be necessary if demand increases to unsustainable levels or if the system simply collapses.

In the meantime I am therefore doing all that I can to secure additional generators of our own. This will ensure that power is delivered more widely during the cuts although I must stress that it is highly unlikely that we will ever be able to deliver uninterrupted power to the quarters and single living accommodation.

I would like to close by congratulating and thanking you for your efforts so far, but I must ask for more if we are to avoid additional cuts. My staff will be issuing separate advice and instructions on how we can work together to reduce demand, but in the meantime I would simply ask you to exercise good judgement and common sense. For example, avoid using air conditioning, turn appliances off when not in use, and ensure dish washers and washing machines are full before you use them. Better still, do so by hand. Power is in least demand after 2000 hrs and 0700 hours, so the more you can do during this time, the better.

I and my team will keep you posted as the situation develops.

CBF