



**MINISTRY
ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO ALL MEDIA/NEWS EDITORS

THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2026

DEE MOURNS THE PASSING OF DR WOLSEY BARNARD

Minister Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, on behalf of the Department of Electricity and Energy (DEE) and the broader energy family, extends heartfelt condolences to the Barnard family following the passing of Dr Wolsey Barnard, Deputy Chairperson of the board of the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute (NRWDI).

Dr Barnard devoted more than three decades to South Africa's energy sector. As Acting Director-General and Deputy Director-General of the former Department of Energy, he played an important role in guiding the country's response to complex energy challenges.

His service across energy regulation, electrification and radioactive waste management reflected his extensive expertise and enduring commitment to public service.

One of his most significant contributions was his leadership of the national electrification programme for 13 years, during which electricity was extended to approximately four million households. This transformed daily life for countless South Africans, enabling children to study after dark, supporting livelihoods and reducing the burden of household work.

As the founding Chief Executive Officer and later Deputy Chairperson of the National Radioactive Waste Disposal Institute (NRWDI), Dr Barnard helped establish and guide an institution entrusted with the safe and responsible management of radioactive waste. A physicist, former university lecturer and mentor, he believed strongly in investing in people. His support for science and engineering education, rural development, and the participation of women, young people and persons with disabilities reflected his commitment to inclusive development.

The DEE family will remember Dr Barnard with gratitude for the knowledge he shared, the institutions he served and the lives he touched through his work.

“We recognise that, beyond his public service and professional achievements, Dr Barnard held a place in his family that no tribute can fully express. We extend our deepest sympathy to the Barnard family and wish them comfort in their memories of him and in the respect and affection of the many people whose lives he touched.”
May Dr Wolsey Barnard rest in peace.

**ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA**