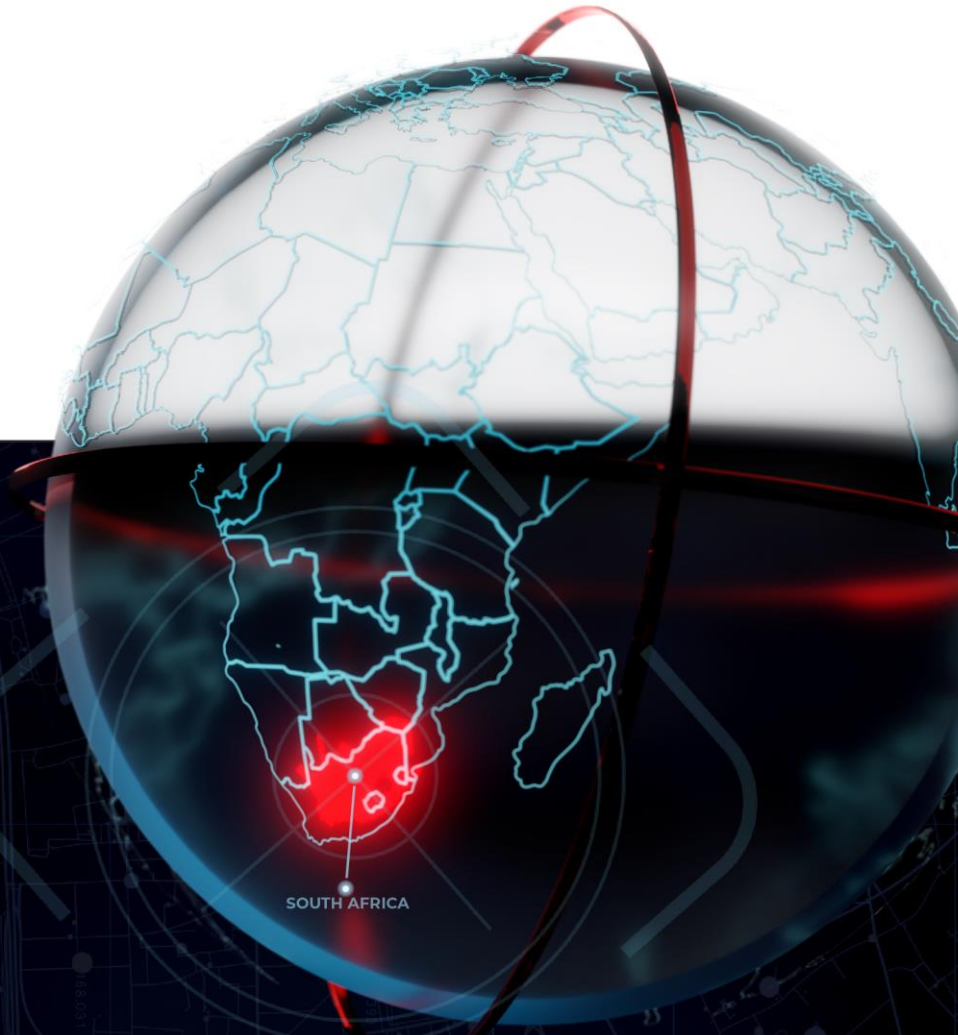




**NSA**  
SOUTH AFRICA

# MONTHLY **RISK** REPORT



SOUTH AFRICA

**DATE: 31/05/2023**  
**COMPILED BY: NSA SA GSOC**

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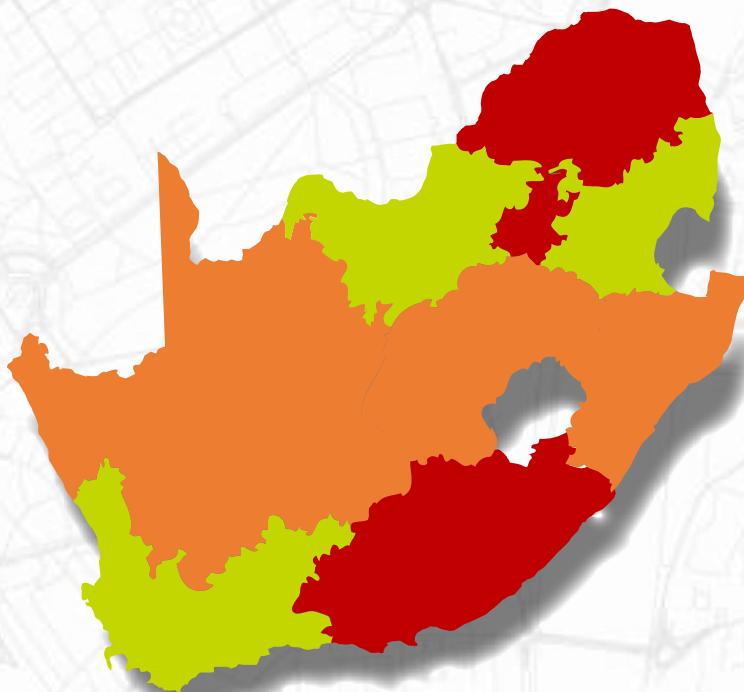
## INTRODUCTION

The following report analyses key occurrences over the month of **May 2023** and their direct and consequential impact on the security situation in South Africa as it relates to both businesses and individuals.

South Africa recorded its first two cholera cases in February 2023, following outbreaks in nearby Mozambique and Malawi. Since the initial cases, the virus has spread from Hammanskraal to Parys and currently has a death toll of 24 people, with hundreds more being hospitalised. As citizens in affected areas are encouraged to purchase bottled water, citizens throughout South Africa ponder the Rand's purchasing power as the interest rate is once again increased, hitting 8,25% on 25 May 2023. This increase has prompted concerns of the reaction the already-struggling nation may have, leading most to believe that further protests surrounding the cost of living are on the horizon. Protests such as the one held at Eskom Megawatt Park or the others held in Soweto, Eldorado Park, and Sandton are becoming a frequent occurrence and fears that this trend will continue may be warranted due to ongoing precipitating events.

## PROVINCIAL RISK RATING

Each province has been assessed over the month of **May 2023** to have the following risk rating:



LOW

MEDIUM

HIGH



# THE MONTH OF MAY IN REVIEW

## LOADSHEDDING IMPACT

Loadshedding constantly fluctuating between stages has local businesses anticipating a loss of revenue, supply chain disruptions and a decrease in productivity. Retail giants such as Pick n Pay and small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) alike have reported notable losses due to the ongoing energy crisis and have bemoaned the financial burden of having to invest in alternative power such as generators.

The contrast between the higher stages of loadshedding being justified by failing generators and the city of Port Alfred being exempt from loadshedding for the BRICS Summit, while Eskom assists Botswana following their national blackout makes it clear that there is an energy crisis, but blurs the extent of this crisis. This contrast also highlights the political interference in Eskom proceedings causing further disgruntlement amongst citizens who lean towards the belief that loadshedding is more politically motivated than the nation is being led to believe.



Amid a growing population, supposedly dwindling or sabotaged coal supplies, and a lack of technological development the supply of electrical power has not kept up with the demand. South Africa’s tendency to be heavily reliant on a single energy source (coal), the country’s severe infrastructural deficiencies, and the theft and vandalism of essential infrastructure has led to the widespread notion that a national blackout is imminent. Key figures such as ANC Secretary General, Fikile Mbalula, Minister of Electricity Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, and Eskom’s acting group chief executive, Calib Cassim, have denied that a national blackout is looming with Mbalula going as far as to say loadshedding would cease by the end of December 2023 and Minister Ramokgopa saying numerous measures have been put into place to prevent a grid collapse.

## SUMMARY OF KEY RISKS AS A RESULT OF CONTINUED LOADSHEDDING

NO:	DETAIL:	LIKELIHOOD:	IMPACT:
1.	Increased traffic conditions throughout each day.	High	Low
2.	Technical security system failure due to lack of adequate power redundancy.	High	Extreme
3.	Increase in business and residential robberies during loadshedding.	High	Extreme
4.	Restricted cellular communication during loadshedding.	High	Moderate

## LOADSHEDDING AND THE ECONOMY

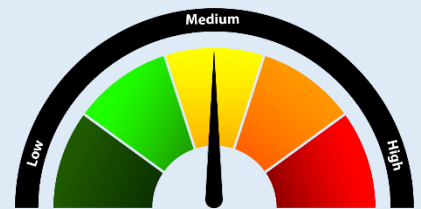
The continued fluctuation in loadshedding stages casts a shadow of doubt over South Africa's economic progression, with recent statements from the Minister of Electricity doing little to ease rising concerns. The economic strain caused by the ongoing energy crisis and ever-increasing interest rates is compounded by the now weekly protests. Protests have generally been prompted by wage increase demands, increases in crime, and unemployment as seen in the Kaalfontein protest.



Travellers are advised to familiarise themselves with their area's loadshedding schedule to minimise inconvenience and risk to personal safety, as well as to avoid protests as much as reasonably possible as passer-by's have previously been attacked by protesters.

### NATIONAL BLACKOUT PROBABILITY

The probability of a national blackout is currently assessed as **medium**. With the power grid already severely constrained, and loadshedding stages fluctuating between stage 3 to 6, it remains to be seen what the impact of a national increase in consumption as winter sets in will be. Eskom has yet to communicate its plan for the imminent consumption increase over June and July, adding to concerns that they lack contingencies for such an eventuality.



In the event that a national blackout did occur, the country – and other countries in the region – would be without power for extended periods of time. In the worst-case scenario, the grid collapsing for more than a full day would result in water running out since water pumps use electricity. As was seen during the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020, people would rush to buy fuel for their vehicles, but now also for generators, thus swiftly depleting fuel supply.

As is currently being experienced, the lack of electricity would affect cell phone reception, thus leading experts and analysts to believe a national blackout would lead to communications going offline. Communications being offline would affect and possibly halt the use of cards and card machines at points of sale, resulting in mass cash withdrawals for the purpose of buying goods. Stores would also struggle and eventually fail to keep up with demand as people panic-buy essentials and stores struggle to restock, due to the fuel shortage preventing trucks from transporting goods. But worst-case scenario aside, the general consensus appears to be that loadshedding will simply worsen, but the grid will not collapse, although it is advised that necessary contingency measures be taken while it is possible.



# CIVIL UNREST AND SOCIAL DISORGANISATION

Protests are an extremely common occurrence in all parts of South Africa, but Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal (KZN) are particularly susceptible to them due to the provinces' population sizes, Gauteng's status as an economic hub and it being home to significant seats of government such as the Union Buildings. Recent protests have generally been related to wage disputes or lack of service delivery and due to South Africa's current economic state and continued breakdown in service delivery, protests now occur on a weekly basis.




The month of May saw many protests all of which varied in scale. These include the service delivery protests in Orlando West, Soweto wherein in angry residents barricaded roads with rocks and debris over the extended power cuts experienced in that area. Similar protests were also seen in Doornkop and Lufhereng, which are also in Soweto. Protests also erupted in Fleurhof over service delivery and protesters again erected blockades and disrupted trafficking to and through the area, as did the residents of Macassar in Cape Town. Similarly, residents of KwaThema in Springs protested over week-long power outages following the KwaThema substation, which had no fire-suppression systems, burning down.

Protests are a significant security risk as they have a tendency to escalate into violence as they gain momentum, even if violence was not initially the aim. This escalation in violence often means that even those merely passing by a protest may be attacked by protesters resulting in personal injury or damage to property. The larger protests are often announced in advance allowing for the necessary planning and security measures to be implemented, but unannounced protests still occur and both types of protests have the potential to escalate. Travellers are strongly advised to avoid areas or routes on which there is protest action.

In Gauteng, every area may be a site for a protest or form part of the route mapped out for a march, but the following sites warrant increased caution:

- Main roads/Major highways: N1, N3, N12, N14, N17, R21, R24, R59, M1 and M2
- Significant buildings:
  - Johannesburg City Hall - Corner Albert Street, Johannesburg
  - Union Buildings - Government Avenue, Pretoria
  - JSE - 2 Gwen Lane, Sandton
  - ANC Head Office - 54 Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Street, Johannesburg
  - EFF Regional Head Office - 119 Marshall Street, Marshalltown, Johannesburg
  - Eskom Megawatt Park - Maxwell Drive, Sandton
  - Municipal offices



In Cape Town, every area may be a site for a protest or form part of the route mapped out for a protest march, but the following sites warrant increased caution:

- Cape Town International Airport (CTIA)
- Roads leading to the CTIA
- Borchard Quarry Road, Matroosfontein
- Klipfontein Road, Mowbray
- Nyanga
- Khayelitsha
- Parklands
- Malibongwe Drive
- Kraaifontain
- Klipfontein Road
- Brackenfell
- Cape Town High Court - Keerom Street, Cape Town
- Parliament of South Africa - 18 Government Avenue, Cape Town
- Cape Town City Council - Old Drill Hall, Cnr Darling & Parade Street, Cape Town

## RELATED MEDIA COVERAGE

- KwaThema residents protest over two week long power outage  
[Read Here](#): 22 May 2023
- Roads around Fleurhof blocked due to service delivery protest on Thursday  
[Read Here](#): 18 May 2023
- Three arrested at UWC residence amid NSFAS-sparked student protest  
[Read Here](#): 12 May 2023
- Soweto residents stage service delivery protest  
[Read Here](#): 12 May 2023
- Parkwood community members protest against the shooting of children  
[Read Here](#): 11 May 2023
- WATCH | 'We are frustrated': Macassar residents protest against power outages caused by cable theft  
[Read Here](#): 10 May 2023
- 'We are frustrated': Macassar residents protest against power outages caused by cable theft  
[Read Here](#): 10 May 2023
- Frustrated Soweto residents protest over ongoing power outages  
[Read Here](#): 09 May 2023
- Ekurhuleni police monitor Tembisa protest over Transnet posts  
[Read Here](#): 08 May 2023



# RISK FORECAST FOR THE COMING MONTH

## GAUTENG - UNREST

Protests have become a weekly occurrence in Gauteng although, they vary in scale and level of violence. Operation Dudula has declared their plans to protest illegal immigration on 1 June 2023, and to not only register as a political party, but to also contest the 2024 elections. Protests relating to this are anticipated, characterised by xenophobic attacks on foreign-owned small businesses as has been seen in past Operation Dudula demonstrations. Ongoing service delivery and wage-related protests are also anticipated following CityPower's announcement to no longer service customers who have unsettled electricity bills.

## LIKELIHOOD



## GAUTENG - INCREASE IN CONTACT CRIMES

National crime rates have notably increased with the latest crime statistics reporting a 4% increase in contact crimes in the fourth quarter of 2022. Gauteng has a very high crime rate with common crimes including robbery, particularly when victims are stopped at a traffic light, carjackings, kidnappings, and gun-related crimes. As winter begins and there are more hours of darkness, travellers are advised to maintain situational awareness, avoid the Johannesburg CBD and townships such as Alexandra, Diepsloot, and Tembisa, and immediately comply if confronted by attackers.

## LIKELIHOOD



## NATIONAL - INCREASE IN LOADSHEDDING

Loadshedding currently fluctuates between the various stages based on national consumption. Gauteng is particularly affected by loadshedding due to rampant cable theft, vandalism of sub-stations and transformers, and the damage caused to the city's aged infrastructure by the loadshedding process, although these challenges are not isolated to the province. There is currently no end in sight for loadshedding and it is anticipated that, as consumption increases over winter, so too will the loadshedding.

## LIKELIHOOD



## NATIONAL - CHOLERA OUTBREAK

The deadly cholera outbreak in Hammanskraal and Parys has exposed weaknesses in the water sanitation process as well as the healthcare sector and triggered concerns of the outbreak spreading. The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) says an investigation is underway into the source/s of the outbreak and that until the source/s have been identified, citizens should practise good food hygiene, regularly wash their hands, and drink bottled water. Given the recent interest rate increase, a food price increase that will likely follow, and the fact that many already pay for tap water; many South Africans may not be willing or able to constantly purchase bottled water, thus adding to the building tension in the nation.

## LIKELIHOOD







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