

Former Eskom official sentenced to 10 years for fraud, theft

A former Eskom administrative clerk has been sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for defrauding the power utility of more than R2.6m.



Image source: sakhorn-saengtongs – [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com)

The former clerk, Nwabisa Ngxola, together with co-accused businessman Michael Chimanzi and Eskom finance clerk Cinderella Moropane were tried on 114 charges including fraud, theft and money laundering, and convicted in the Nelspruit Commercial Crimes Court.

Chimanzi was sentenced to eight years behind bars and Moropane will hear her fate on 17 May.

National Prosecuting Authority regional spokesperson Monica Nyuswa said the three acted in cahoots and submitted fraudulent invoices to the power utility.

“Ngxola’s password and username were used to capture certain payments to Mandla Lines CC, which is a legitimate

company registered in the name of Chimanzi. The three shared the proceeds amongst themselves and they were arrested after the police received a tip-off.

“The supervisor of two Eskom officials testified about the extent of the damage caused to the business. Their evidence was supported by the owner of Mandla Lines, who confirmed that they colluded and provided false invoices to Eskom,” she said.

Nyuswa explained that the Magistrate in the case took several factors into consideration when sentencing Ngxola.

“[The Magistrate] said Ngxola had enough time to retract herself from the offence, instead, she waited until the whistleblower reported the incident to Eskom. She sentenced the accused to 10 years imprisonment and upon conviction, Ngxola applied for leave to appeal her conviction and sentence which was dismissed.

“Fraud is a pandemic that has engulfed our economy and is perpetrated by well-sophisticated people and should be stopped in its tracks,” Nyuswa said.

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