Status Report

ACTis | Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System

ACTis provides risk analysis and early intervention recommendations against state capture and corruption in South African government institutions

PUBLIC ENTITY

ACT | ACCOUNTABILITY TRACKER

ISS | INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

City Power Johannesburg

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About the Institution

City Power Johannesburg (City Power), a municipal entity wholly owned by the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ), is responsible for providing electricity to Johannesburg. City Power reports to the Member of the Mayoral Committee for the Environment and Infrastructure Services, and the Board serves as its accounting authority. In 2024/25, City Power reported expenditure of R25.4bn.[1]

A Presidential Working Group (PWG) is currently intervening in the CoJ, including City Power, providing advisory support and facilitating direct support from government institutions such as the National Treasury, Eskom and others.[2]

Flag Status

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
								
Improper appointments	Co-opting key functions	Climate of fear or favour	Corrupt awards	Financial malpractice	Obstructing accountability	Manipulating perceptions	Private gain	Shadow network

ISS Analysis

- ACTis has raised four flags for City Power and placed one under monitoring.
- The high level of senior executive vacancies at City Power, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), suggests a leadership in crisis. With sustained allegations of corruption and nepotism, numerous investigations, and significant operational and financial failures, the leadership has much to account for.
- A climate of fear or favour may compromise the working environment for staff. This reduces institutional independence and weakens the integrity of decision-making. It may also weaken internal controls, particularly in the key areas of procurement and financial management. Allegations of irregular contract awards, inflated pricing and contract-related misconduct raised by investigative journalists align with external audit findings on irregular expenditure, internal control deficiencies and significant financial issues. This suggests that conditions within City Power are enabling systemic corruption.
- City Power has shown some resilience in adopting investigation findings,

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 Under monitoring

disciplinary and other corrective measures. However, these tend to hold mid- to low-level officials responsible, which contradicts some media and external audit findings. Ongoing law enforcement investigations may provide more decisive conclusions on whether corrupt syndicates dominate the institution. In the meantime, City Power's dynamics suggest systemic vulnerability to corruption, with persistent governance weaknesses across many functions.

- This is reflected in the high level of service delivery disruptions experienced in Johannesburg. In addition, electricity losses total 30%, comprising non-technical losses of R4bn and technical losses of R1.7bn.[3]

Findings

Flag #1
Improper Appointments

The flag is being monitored to determine whether the pattern of vacancies in senior positions persists.

- CEO Tshifularo Mashava, who was appointed in 2022, resigned with effect from 30 March 2026. She said she wanted to pursue other professional and personal opportunities.[4] During her tenure, the utility's financial and operational performance was poor, and several of her relatives were reportedly appointed at City Power. In July 2025, the Board promised to investigate, saying that the Audit and Risk Committee was reviewing allegations of nepotism, unqualified appointments and internal control weaknesses (see Flag #3: Climate of Fear or Favour).[5]
- Ten out of 15 senior executive positions at City Power were vacant in 2024/25.[6]

Flag #3
Climate of Fear or Favour

The flag is raised because the working environment appears to favour loyalists, intimidate others, and may include other dysfunctional dynamics.

- Former CEO Mashava, Group Executive for Human Resources and Corporate Services Olivia Phanyana and Group Executive for Governance and Corporate Services Stanley Shabangu allegedly hired and promoted their respective relatives at City Power.[7] Two of Mashava's relatives are reportedly employed as revenue collection specialists in the finance department; one is a senior manager in employee services, and another is an intern. Three of Phanyana's relatives are reportedly employed as a field auditor, a vending analyst and in specialist systems application. One of Phanyana's relatives was

Flag raised Flag lowered Under monitoring

reportedly hired in 2025 despite a hiring freeze. Three of Shabangu's relatives were hired as a trade assistant, a system controller and a clerk.[8]

- City Power spokesperson Isaac Mangena confirmed the appointments but said the individuals were hired through a transparent, merit-based process in which they declared any conflicts of interest. In October 2025, Board Chairperson Makhosini Kharodi said the Board had commissioned an external forensic investigation, which found that former CEO Mashava did not participate in or influence recruitment processes involving her relatives.[9]

- In 2025, a senior Greater Johannesburg African National Congress regional party official reportedly attempted to extort and intimidate senior City Power executives. The party official allegedly demanded that disciplinary charges be dropped against an implicated City Power official and that the official be reinstated. The party official also allegedly demanded that all politically connected companies that were blacklisted for inflating prices when doing business with City Power be reinstated. The South African Police Service (SAPS) reportedly investigated after a case was opened in July 2025 and made a referral to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).[10]
- In 2024/25, the vacancy rate for professionally qualified staff was 43.8%, up from 36% the previous year. Although hiring constraints may be in place, ACTis is monitoring high vacancy rates that may suggest the institution's working environment is unattractive to skilled workers.[11]

Flag #4
Corrupt Awards

The flag is raised because related suppliers have been repeatedly and irregularly awarded contracts.

- Since at least 2023, City Power has been the subject of multiple investigations and allegations relating to procurement irregularities, fraud, contractor management and governance failures. These include internal investigations by the utility, an external forensic review commissioned by the Board, investigations by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), and extensive reporting by investigative journalists.[12]
  - In March 2025, it was reported that around R335m from City Power's maintenance budget may have been misappropriated during six months in 2023. Misappropriations allegedly included inflated invoices, fraudulent job cards and payments for items such as stationery, cleaning equipment and maintenance goods. An internal memorandum reportedly warned senior management that multiple contractors appeared to have submitted fraudulent invoices.[13]
  - Spokesperson Mangena said an internal audit investigation began in October 2023 and concluded in March 2025. The investigation identified corruption schemes run by officials and irregular contracts involving procurement and financial fraud. Fifteen

officials were identified for disciplinary action, with one matter referred for criminal proceedings. Mangena said City Power was disciplining officials implicated in fraudulent behaviour and had tightened internal controls.[14]

- In October 2025, Chairperson Kharodi said the external forensic investigation found no evidence of wrongdoing by former CEO Mashava or the senior executive relating to governance, procurement, recruitment and infrastructure management misconduct raised in media reports. This apparently covered allegations of inflated contractor payments and irregular procurement processes.[15]
- The findings of the Board-appointed review appear to differ from conclusions reached in other investigations and from allegations reported by media organisations, which continued to publish reports alleging broader governance and procurement concerns within the utility, including allegations involving senior officials and major contractors.[16]

- Chosen Engineering is a company that allegedly benefitted from several irregular contract awards from City Power:
  - It is reportedly one of the eight contractors City Power named in connection with the alleged defrauding of R335m from the maintenance budget (see above).[17]
  - City Power is reportedly investigating a possible fraudulent payment of R302.3m to Chosen Engineering in connection with a 2024 contract. No further details have been provided.[18]
  - Chosen Engineering also reportedly received an irregular contract to electrify a temporary settlement in 2024. The original budget was reportedly R11.15m and increased to R121m. The R110m over-run was allegedly not reported to the CoJ Council.[19]
  - Witness Mazanga owns Chosen Engineering. Mazanga reportedly denied being the company's director or receiving multi-million-rand contracts from City Power. The Department of Home Affairs is allegedly investigating Mazanga for identity fraud for holding three South African identities, including under the names of 'Thembinkosi Ndlovu' and 'Witness Sithole'.[20] Mazanga is also known as 'Reverend Witness Acts' and is a preacher at Chosen World Ministries in Johannesburg.[21]
- The DPCI are reportedly investigating several City Power contracts:
  - R335m worth of contracts that may have been misappropriated during six months in 2023 (see above).
  - R100.6m allegedly spent on procuring a 'supervisory control and data acquisition system' from contractor Central Bridge Construction, originally costed at R8.6m.[22]
  - A 2023 contract to supply electricity transformers worth R67m, due to be delivered by 22 December 2023, but allegedly never delivered.[23]
  - The DPCI attempted a search and seizure at City Power's offices in September 2025. However, City Power obtained an urgent interdict from the High Court in

Johannesburg that suspended the search, reportedly because the warrant was too vague.[24]

- Between July 2024 and February 2025, an operation to combat corruption networks operating at City Power apparently resulted in 279 suspected criminals being arrested, including 11 from the utility, according to spokesperson Mangena. Mangena did not say if the DPCI was involved. [25]

Flag #5
Financial Malpractice

The flag is raised due to systemic weaknesses in financial management.

- In 2024/25, City Power recorded a net financial loss of R3.17bn. Revenue was affected by electricity distribution losses of R5.7bn, including R1.7bn in technical losses (where electricity is dissipated during transmission) and R4bn in losses due to non-payment by consumers. The utility wrote off R9.48bn during the year due to irrecoverable debtors.[26] According to the CoJ, it will transfer some aspects of billing management to City Power to improve billing accuracy and query resolution. However, the CoJ will still collect revenue.[27]
- According to the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA), there is significant doubt whether City Power can continue as a going concern. This is based on its net financial losses and total liabilities exceeding assets by R4.4bn in 2024/25.[28]
- By May 2026, City Power owed Eskom R5.3bn in arrears, which had accumulated over several years. Eskom threatened to interrupt or cut off electricity supply to parts of Johannesburg. The Minister of Electricity and Energy, Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, brokered a solution in August 2026 in which the CoJ paid the full R5.3bn in arrears, and the CoJ committed to paying future accounts on time.[29]
- Material findings identified by the AGSA in 2024/25 included failure to prevent R5.1bn in irregular expenditure, failure to prevent R720m in fruitless and wasteful expenditure (mainly interest on late payments to Eskom) and allowing expenditure to exceed the approved budget.[30]
- In 2024/25, irregular expenditure was R5.1bn, equivalent to 20% of annual expenditure.[31]
- In 2024/25, City Power's Board wrote off accumulated expenditure of R9.2bn, resulting in a closing balance of R504m. The notes in the Integrated Annual Report claim the Board did so after considering investigation reports, recommendations to write off the amount, and following all governance processes.[32]
- The AGSA identified internal control deficiencies in compliance with legislation in 2024/25. As its accounting authority, City Power's Board did not adequately oversee internal controls related to compliance with key laws and regulations. Senior management did not ensure that adequate controls were in place to prevent such non-compliance. This included expenditure, procurement and contract management.[33]

- During a meeting with Parliament's Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) on 9 June 2026, CoJ officials said the National Treasury is reviewing aspects of City Power's expenditure and financial position, as well as the utility's plans to address these matters.[34]

Flag #6

Obstructing Accountability

The achievement of an unqualified audit is noted under the flag.

- City Power has received unqualified audit opinions from the AGSA since at least 2020/21.[35] This means that the annual financial statements have presented a fair view of City Power's financial situation to the public.

Flag #9

Shadow Network



The flag is raised because the same actors appeared repeatedly under Flag #4: Corrupt Awards, which may indicate a pattern of improper influence.

- Chosen Engineering received several large contract awards with alleged irregularities and received a possibly fraudulent payment that is under investigation (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards).

Recommended Actions

	DUTY BEARER	ACTION(S)	ASSOCIATED FLAGS
1.	City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality Council	• Require regular reports from City Power to verify whether payments to Eskom are up-to-date and all National Treasury directives are being implemented. • Mandate the City Power Board to submit an executive recruitment strategy to fill the 10 vacant senior positions (including the CEO).	Flag #5: Financial Malpractice Flag #1: Improper Appointments
2.	Public Protector	• Investigate the high vacancy rate and allegations relating to the working climate within City Power.	Flag #1: Improper Appointments Flag #3: Climate of Fear or Favour
3.	Special Investigating Unit	• Advocate for a proclamation to investigate Chosen Engineering as well as those irregular contract awards (and related payments) and contract management issues identified by the AGSA and not already subject to the DPCI's investigation.	Flag #4: Corrupt Awards



The 9 Flags

Flag #1
Improper Appointments

Improper appointments, dismissals or failure to remove individuals in senior positions may be used to drive a corrupt agenda.

Flag #2
Co-opting Key Functions

Informal control may be established over critical functions within the institution to abuse them.

Flag #3
Climate of Fear or Favour

The working culture favours loyalty over duty; alignment with a corrupt agenda is rewarded, and resistance is punished.

Flag #4
Corrupt Awards

Contracts, licences, partnerships, loans and/or investments may be awarded irregularly and repeatedly benefit the same actors.

Flag #5
Financial Malpractice

The institution's financial management practices may be abused to advance a corrupt agenda.

Flag #6
Obstructing Accountability

The institution's internal operations might be deliberately obscured to hide potential misconduct.

Flag #7
Manipulating Perceptions

A public narrative that frames misconduct as innocence may be promoted.

Flag #8
Private Gain

Illicit gains may be distributed to benefit the same actors.

Flag #9
Shadow Network

The same public and private actors may collude to gain control over an institution's assets and functions, benefiting repeatedly.

About ACTis

What is ACTis?

The Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System is an initiative of the Anti-Corruption and Accountability Project at the Institute for Security Studies. It provides analysis on corruption and state capture in South Africa, to inform early intervention and enforcement. It utilises a system of indicators and an AI-driven data-collection and analysis tool, validated by human experts. It identifies risks within individual government institutions and produces actionable recommendations to address them, with a view to disrupting patterns of state capture and corruption. Findings are shared directly with government and other duty-bearers, civil society organisations, the media and the public, empowering authorities to intervene, strengthening accountability, and enabling citizens activism.

Links to ACTis Information:

Further project information may be found at the following links:

Terms and Definitions

Project Methodology and Analytical Framework

About the Anti-Corruption and Accountability project

About the Institute for Security Studies

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