

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COMMISSION'S UNDERTAKINGS

Electrification of Railways. Work is proceeding to complete the electrification of the remaining section of the Natal main line, between Union Junction and Volksrust. Testing and proving of plant is scheduled to begin towards the end of 1963; and the change-over to electric working is expected early in 1964.

Two further major electrification projects are being carried out by the South African Railways: the electrification of the main line between Klerksdorp and Kimberley, and the electrification of the line from Witbank to Komatipoort.

Escom's planning for the supply to the Klerksdorp/Kimberley section calls for the construction of 210 miles of 132 kV transmission line from Vierfontein Power Station to Kimberley and the equipping of fourteen traction substations, seven of which will be situate within the Rand and Orange Free State Undertaking and seven in the Cape Northern Undertaking. In addition it is necessary to proceed with the construction of a 275 kV interconnector between Everest distribution station (on the Orange Free State gold field) and Kimberley. Target dates for commissioning the traction substations extend over the period June-October, 1964; and for the 275 kV transmission line, about the beginning of 1965.

The supply for the Witbank/Komatipoort electrification will be provided by the Eastern Transvaal Undertaking, and it is fortunate that the engineering requirements can be co-ordinated with the important new developments of the transmission and distribution system in the Eastern Transvaal, that is, the 132 kV line being constructed from Komati Power Station to Rockdale distribution station (at Middelburg), the existing 132 kV line Komati-Machadodorp, and the new 275 kV transmission line which is being built from Komati Power Station to a major Distribution Station near Nelspruit. This Distribution Station has been sited on the farm Marathon and will be known by that name.

The traction requirements call for the establishment of sixteen traction substations between Witbank and Komatipoort. The first two, at Olifantsrivier and Middelburg, will be supplied at 88 kV from the Rockdale 132/88 kV stepdown, and the remaining fourteen will be supplied at 132 kV by a 132 kV line which will be routed Rockdale-Machadodorp-Marathon-Komatipoort, a distance of about 196 miles. The target dates for commissioning this section of the Railways' electrification extend over the second half of 1965 and the first quarter of 1966.