

High-powered panel to discuss critical issues in SA electricity sector at Windaba

The electricity sector in South Africa has been the subject of intense debate in recent weeks, with the Eskom new-build projected to start delivering much needed power in 2015.

Questions around where the country will find the electricity to support the ambitions in the National Development Plan until 2020 persist. A high-powered panel has been assembled to shed light on this and other related questions on November 4 2014 at the South African Wind Energy Association's (SAWEA's) upcoming Windaba Conference in Cape Town.

Subjects to be discussed include:

- As the lowest cost source of bulk new electricity, what will the role of wind power be?
- Will Eskom's financial situation affect the roll out of wind power?
- When will the other five units at Medupi and all six at Kusile be commissioned?
- How long can the country continue to spend circa ZAR 11 billion power annum on diesel due to insufficient availability of electricity?
- How much load shedding will we see?
- How can the renewable energy roll-out be accelerated, given that energy from waste is the only other source that can deliver additional power to the constrained grid in the next five years?

A panel of prestigious speakers will tackle these questions including Mike Roussow former chair of the Energy Intensive User's Group, former member of NERSA and presently Energy Thought Leader at Eskom. His colleague Power Systems Analyst Keith Bowen Keith Bowen, who was the primary energy modeller for the Integrated Resource Plan, South Africa's energy blueprint for the next twenty years will also join the debate.

On the same panel the South African Independent Power Producer Association's (SAIPPA's) Doug Kuni, who has intimate knowledge of Eskom's financial and technical position will join Paolo Frankl, Head of Renewable Energy at the International Energy Agency who will give an international view of the SA industry. Cas Coovadia, acting CEO of Business Unity South Africa, who has been deeply involved in discussion between business and government on energy matters will also participate.

The session is titled 'Aligning the South African wind energy agenda with broader government objectives' and will be chaired by Brian Day, Managing Director of South African National Energy Association (SANEA). Participation from the floor will be welcomed.

Other key speakers at the South African Wind Energy Association's (SAWEA) annual event include Tina Joemat-Pettersson, Energy Minister and Windaba patron and Karen Breytenbach, leader of the government's Public Private Partnership (PPP) Unit and figurehead of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP).

"The calibre of this year's speakers demonstrates how important the wind industry is for both the public and the private sector. Windaba offers a forum for key industry figures to get together in one place and debate the issues that are at the forefront of the sector," said SAWEA CEO Johan Van den Berg.

The theme for this year's conference, which will be held in Cape Town in November, is 'Power2thePeople: Changing lives through wind energy' and will highlight the significant benefits that developments will bring to neighbouring communities. More than ZAR5 billion has already been earmarked for social economic development from wind farms already in operation and those currently being built. A community trust ownership scheme is also part of the programme and local communities own up to five per cent of their local development in shares. How these financial benefits can be most effectively spent and distributed will form a major part of the debate at Windaba.

A one-day workshop running alongside the conference will focus specifically on Socio Economic Development and will be led by Peter Willis, regular facilitator of the Eskom NGO

forum and the South African Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change, among many others.

SAWEA already has an impressive list of prestigious speakers confirmed and expects the number of delegates to again exceed 500. Windaba is the biggest wind conference held on the African continent. As well as the aforementioned speakers, there will be an opportunity for direct engagement on the subject of local content between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry. The team of consultants leading the study into localisation of the wind energy sector in South Africa will also be in attendance.

Conference delegates will also contribute to a high level strategic planning session for South Africa's International Renewable Energy Conference (SAIREC) which will be held for the first time in 2015, incorporating Windaba and that is expected to attract more than five thousand delegates from all over the globe.

For further information on Windaba and the current programme, please visit the Windaba website at www.windaba.co.za <<http://www.windaba.co.za/>> . Booth space and sponsorship opportunities are still available.