



ELECTRICITY

# Eskom's support for more self-generation welcomed

THE renewable energy sector, particularly the solar energy industry, this week welcomed Eskom CEO André de Ruyter's backing of an increased generation licence exemption cap.

This came during an ENSafrica webinar last week, where De Ruyter supported changes that allowed individuals or businesses to build generation facilities of up to 50 megawatts (MW) without a permit.

An increase in distributed generation can add to the grid capacity, thereby reducing the risk of load shedding and creating jobs. However, the South African Photovoltaic Industry Association (Sapvia) believes there must be policy and regulatory action.

Sapvia is a not-for-profit body consisting of role-players in South Africa's photovoltaic (PV) market.

Sapvia's, chief operating officer,



Niveshen Govender

Niveshen Govender, said: "Sapvia has long been engaged in advocating for the systematic easing of licensing thresholds, to unlock the significant opportunity held by distributed generation. We therefore welcome the support of the state-owned utility for lifting licensing thresholds from 1MW to 50MW in order to accelerate distributed generation by large customers."

He said Eskom's support should encourage the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and the National Energy Regulator of SA (Nersa) to expedite regulatory changes.

Govender said the benefits of specific allocation within the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) were common knowledge, and Sapvia was committed to collaborating with the DMRE and Nersa to develop the required changes.

The IRP is South Africa's electricity

capacity plan that aims to provide an indication of the country's electricity demand, how the demand will be supplied, and what the supply will cost.

According to the IRP19, the most dominant technology is renewable energy from wind and solar PV technologies.

"The deployment of embedded generation capacity will release the pressure on Eskom's already constrained supply. Simply put, distributed generation provides rapid, clean additional capacity to the grid," Govender said.

Govender said that, in addition to creating jobs, distributed generation could encourage localisation and industrialisation, which could potentially be the driving force behind the country's economic recovery. | African News Agency (ANA)



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