



RENEWABLE SECTOR GIVES ESKOM'S DE RUYTER'S EXEMPTION CAP A THUMBS UP

THE renewable energy industry has welcomed Eskom chief executive André de Ruyter's support of an increased distributed generation licence exemption cap. Last week, in an ENSAfrica webinar, De Ruyter backed reforms to allow anyone to build their own generation facilities of up to 50 megawatts (MW) without needing a licence. The South African Photovoltaic Industry Association (Sapvia) said yesterday that distributed generation could add capacity to the grid, reduce load shedding and create jobs, but there must be policy and regulatory action. Sapvia chief operations officer Niveshen Govender said they had long advocated the systematic easing of licensing thresholds. "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," Govender said. "As a key sector player, Eskom's support in this effort should encourage more haste in regulatory changes from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy and the National Energy Regulator of SA (Nersa)." Increased deployment of embedded generation capacity will release the pressure on Eskom's already constrained supply, which is plagued by frequent power cuts. South Africa's energy plan, the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP 2019), removes the need for ministerial approval for distributed generation for own use above 1MW before Nersa can process a generation licence application.

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