

Highest number of renewable energy installations in SA

SPECIALIST electrical contractor, Brand Engineering, has carried out the highest number of utility scale solar Renewable Energy (RE) installations in the RE industry in South Africa. It has become a key construction partner for RE developers, and is responsible for the generation of 360MW of power for Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) projects and other related renewable energy initiatives.

Established over 45 years ago, Brand Engineering, together with its two BBBEE companies, Besamandla (Western Cape) and Besamandla (Eastern Cape), operates in southern Africa and the

African continent.

“Our exposure to the multi-disciplined nature of the RE projects enables us to offer engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) solutions for the civil, electrical and mechanical scopes of these projects,” explains Herman Kriel, Group Managing Director of Brand Engineering. The company is the only South African contractor with experience and exposure to all types of renewable technologies.

REIPPPP

Brand Engineering ventured into the RE market when the REIPPPP commenced.

The solar photovoltaic (PV) REIPPPP projects which the company has

completed to date and which are fully operational are:

- 6,8 MWp Rustmo1 plant – North West (NW)
- 10 MWp Konkoon-sies plant – Northern Cape (NC)
- 10 MWp Aries plant – NC
- 22 MWp Herbert plant – NC
- 11 MWp Greefspan plant – NC
- 10 MWp Aurora plant – Western Cape (WC)
- 10 MWp Vredendal plant – WC
- 94 MWp Sishen plant – NC
- 86 MWp Prieska plant – NC

In addition it has completed six separate grid connection projects totalling 127 MW.



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Also as part of the REIPPPP, Brand Engineering was appointed to carry out three EPC wind power projects in the Eastern Cape, which are now fully operation-

al. They are:

- 63 MW Grassridge wind farm
- 24 MW Waainek wind farm
- 21 MW Chaba wind farm

The company has multi-year operation and maintenance (O&M) contracts in place for various projects. It guarantees the stipulated power generation, availability and carbon savings for all the projects.

“Utilising online technology, we monitor environmental conditions and all procedures and progress on an ongoing basis from our Cape Town head office,” says Kriel.

In addition to the PV and wind REIPPPP installations, Brand Engineering has commenced a Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) initiative. It is responsible for the electrical infrastructure, more specifically electrical cable and collector installation, for the 100MW Ilanga CSP in the Northern Cape, which is currently under construction.

PV rooftop initiatives

It has also completed thirteen solar PV commercial rooftop projects around South Africa in excess of 3 400kWp. Included are three strategic rooftop installations for Eskom’s offices in East London, Bellville and Pietermaritzburg and the company consider solar rooftop as the future of RE in South Africa.

Battery storage solution

The provision of consistent solar power output even in peak periods has been a challenge to the RE industry. “A solu-

tion to this challenge is storage provided by means of batteries,” explains Kriel. “Brand Engineering is undertaking multiple battery solar storage initiatives which will store in excess of two MW hours.”

Solar power generation for airports

In a more recent, ground-breaking RE development, Brand Engineering completed the construction of two solar plants, which are now each generating 500kWp to power Upington and Kimberley Airports. These were full EPC contracts and the Brand Engineering Group was responsible for mechanical, electrical and civils work, as well as grid connection and ongoing O&M.

Socio-economic requirements

Brand Engineering subscribes to and is fully compliant with the socio-economic requirements of the projects it undertakes and in fact exceeds stipulated targets. It focuses on employing local workers where the projects are located. “Transferring and developing skills is part of our commitment to our employees, and this applies to both permanent and project-based employees,” says Kriel.

Depending on the size of each project, Brand Engineering employs from 20 to 600 skilled and unskilled people per project.

The company emphasises ‘safety first’ and has a five Star Safety Grading.

Quality management

ISO 9001:2008 certified for Quality Management Systems, Brand Engineering last year won the Electrical Contractors Association’s (ECA) ‘Reticulation Contractor of the Year’ award for renewable projects. The ECA Presidential Excellence Awards recognise quality workmanship and professionalism within the electrical industry.

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