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VDE Americas Enters North American Market to Meet Investor Demand for Solar PV Power Plant Quality Assurance

Specialized line of quality assurance products with Fraunhofer ISE ushers in new era of increased confidence in financing

PV Rollout – 3rd European American Solar Deployment Conference, Atlanta, Georgia— February 28, 2013— VDE, a globally recognized premium certification body, today announced the establishment of a U.S.-based wholly owned subsidiary, VDE Americas. One of the first key activities is the introduction of a set of premium tailored products for the testing and certification of complete large scale PV systems with the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, a world-class applied research institute for solar energy. The new quality mark—VDE Quality Tested for PV Power Plants—verifies the complete certification of solar photovoltaic (PV) power plants, including quality, performance and safety of the PV system. For more information on the VDE Quality Tested mark for PV Power Plants, please visit:

<http://www.vde.com/en/Institute/Industries/Documents/IS%20644E.pdf>

“There is enormous potential for growth of PV installations worldwide, and with increasingly competitive price levels there is a strong need to ensure the safety and performance of the system as a whole”, said Prof. Eicke R. Weber, Director of Fraunhofer ISE, at the PV Rollout conference in Atlanta. “I am sure that the product portfolio that Fraunhofer ISE and VDE have developed together, will support the American and global market. Fraunhofer ISE contributes 20 years of experience in PV power plant assurance, including yield reports, precise module characterization, system testing and system monitoring.”

PRESS RELEASE

The approach of VDE and Fraunhofer ISE goes beyond established international standards with new, customized test procedures and services to help solar projects achieve bankability by reducing technical risk. In North and South America, multi-million dollar investments are being made into individual solar PV power plants. Several new large-scale projects are on the way, following the growing demand for clean energy generation sources worldwide. Investors and lenders require a premium and trustworthy level of quality assurance on a system-wide level in order to reduce risk and increase the level of confidence in their investments.

“Each solar plant faces unique requirements and conditions and, over the years, real world experience has only served to highlight the importance of system design, proper planning, engineering, component selection and construction work for successful PV systems,” stated John Sedgwick, President of VDE Americas. “Together, VDE and Fraunhofer ISE have created new internal regulations and test procedures that anticipate and meet investor demands around quality, safety and performance assurance in this new era of solar PV power.

The commonly operated CFV Solar Test Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will also support the quality assurance services being offered by the partners.

About VDE Institute:

The VDE Institute is a significant part of the VDE Association for Electrical, Electronic and Information Technology. It is one of the largest technical and scientific associations in Europe with more than 35,000 members. Its scope comprises knowledge transfers in a network of experts, technology and education policies as well as international norms and standards and product testing and certification.

The VDE Institute is an independent institution which is nationally and internationally accredited. It is responsible for testing and certifying the safety and performance of electronic devices, components and systems for the consumer and the general public using the highest standards of quality.

Since 1920, the VDE mark stands for safety and quality in electro and communication technology. Independent test engineers put more than 100,000 electronic products per year through rigid tests before assigning the VDE mark. Worldwide, VDE-experts supervise more than 10,000 manufacturing plants. Cooperation agreements with more than 50 countries ensure that the inspections of the VDE Institute are internationally recognized. Millions of electrical products worldwide carry VDE certification marks. www.vde.com

About VDE Americas:

VDE Americas is a wholly owned subsidiary of the VDE Testing and Certification Institute, Germany. The new subsidiary is located in Silicon Valley and will service VDE markets and customers in North, South and Latin America. VDE Americas is staffed by highly experienced solar industry professionals. The subsidiary will serve as the hub for initial sales, marketing and technical service provision into the Americas regions.

PRESS RELEASE

About Fraunhofer ISE

With a staff of 1,270, the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, based in Freiburg, is the largest solar energy research institute in Europe. Fraunhofer ISE is committed to promoting energy supply systems which are sustainable, economic, safe and socially just. It creates the technological foundations for supplying energy efficiently and on an environmentally sound basis in industrialized, threshold and developing countries. To this end, the institute develops materials, components, systems and processes for a total of eight different business areas: Energy-Efficient Buildings, Applied Optics and Functional Surfaces, Solar Thermal Technology, Silicon Photovoltaics, Photovoltaic Modules and Systems, Alternative Photovoltaic Technology, Renewable Power Supply and Hydrogen Technology. Fraunhofer ISE also has numerous accredited test facilities. www.ise.fraunhofer.de

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