



NEWS RELEASE

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CSA GROUP, VDE INSTITUTE, FRAUNHOFER CSE AND ISE ANNOUNCE JOINT AGREEMENT FOR PHOTOVOLTAIC MODULE TESTING SERVICES

Plans Include Opening Solar Technology Facility in the U.S.

Toronto, May 26, 2010 – CSA Group, today announced a reciprocal testing services agreement for photovoltaic modules with German VDE Testing and Certification Institute. In addition, CSA Group and VDE will work with the Fraunhofer USA Center for Sustainable Energy Systems (CSE) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems (ISE) to jointly open a new solar technology testing facility in the U.S. Southwest.

The reciprocal testing services agreement is effective immediately. It will enable both organizations to test products to current applicable standards and accept testing reports. With one test, CSA International and VDE solar photovoltaic clients will now be able to access global markets, while decreasing development costs, time to market and redundant testing and certification.

Under the joint agreement, all parties will invest in and share ownership of a new testing facility specifically designed to meet the future needs of the solar photovoltaic industry. The new facility will be built in the U.S. Southwest in late 2010 and will test products to ULC/ORD-C1703, UL 1703 and IEC 61730 safety standards, as well as IEC 61215 and IEC 61646 performance standards.

“By working with research and certification leaders, such as VDE, Fraunhofer ISE and CSE, we will provide clients with one-test certification, improved and timely access to global markets along with access to cutting-edge solar photovoltaic testing technologies and research and development capabilities,” says Ash Sahi, president and CEO, CSA Group.

“The VDE Institute has been successfully involved with CSA Group and the innovation experts from Fraunhofer for many years,” says Wilfried Jäger, Managing Director, VDE Testing and Certification Institute. “With this joint venture we are creating a global center of excellence for photovoltaics. Our customers, who work to develop solar technologies in accordance with the global climate change programs, will benefit and will pass the benefits to their customers. While utilizing the latest technology during extensive testing in Europe, Asia, and North America, we now can offer access to the global market.”

The VDE Institute has many different accreditations from around the world. Among others, it is accredited by the Central Body of the Laender for Safety (ZLS) for the VDE-GS mark for photovoltaic components and systems. Under the terms of the agreement, VDE will offer clients access to CSA certification marks for North America. Similarly, CSA International will offer clients access to the VDE-, VDE-GS-, VDE-EMC-Marks, CB certificates and EC Declarations of Conformity as a basis for the CE marking in Europe on photovoltaic products.

Fraunhofer ISE and CSE will ensure that the new test facility will be set up and operated with the latest PV technologies in mind. Roland Schindler, Executive Director of Fraunhofer CSE and Senior Researcher at ISE remarked that “The new certification test facility will be another way for Fraunhofer to contribute to the market introduction of innovative, cost-saving PV technologies.”

As a long standing leader in solar energy technology, Fraunhofer ISE's world-class research and development test center in Freiburg, Germany and the PV module testing and certification service in Singapore, jointly operated by VDE and Fraunhofer are a welcome addition to CSA Group's photovoltaic testing and certification capabilities in their Vancouver, B.C. laboratories.

About CSA Group

CSA Group is an independent, not-for-profit membership association serving business, industry, government and consumers. CSA Group consists of three divisions: CSA Standards, a leading standards-based solutions organization, providing standards development, application products, training and advisory services; CSA International, which provides testing and certification services for electrical, mechanical, plumbing, gas and a variety of other products; and OnSpeX, a provider of consumer product evaluation, inspection and advisory services for retailers and manufacturers. For more, visit www.csagroup.org

About The VDE Testing and Certification Institute

The VDE Testing and Certification Institute is an independent institution which is nationally and internationally accredited. Under the leadership of Wilfried Jäger, Managing Director, the VDE Institute 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. The independent test engineers put more than 100,000 electronic products per year to rigid tests before they assign the VDE mark. Worldwide the VDE-experts supervise more than 7,000 manufacturing plants. Cooperation agreements with more than 50 countries make sure that the inspections of the VDE Institute are internationally recognized. More than 200,000 product families and therefore more than a million of products worldwide carry VDE certification marks. The non-profit VDE Testing and Certification Institute in Offenbach employ about 450 staff members. In addition VDE has established a worldwide network, especially in Asia and, therefore, increased its staff by 300 persons, mostly for testing and inspection issues. For more, visit www.vde.com

About Fraunhofer ISE and CSE

Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is the leading organization for applied research in Europe with 59 research institutes and 17,000 employees. Fraunhofer USA, Inc. is a non-profit applied research organization headquartered in Plymouth, Michigan with six research centers that collaborate with major universities throughout the U.S. www.fraunhofer.org

One of Fraunhofer USA's research centers is the Center for Sustainable Energy Systems CSE, located in Cambridge, MA. CSE is an applied research and development laboratory dedicated to the commercialization of clean energy technologies. CSE engages in contract research and development with private companies, government entities, and academic institutions. Current research focuses on PV module design and manufacturing and energy efficient building technologies. cse.fraunhofer.org/

The Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE, located in Freiburg, Germany is the largest solar energy research institute in Europe. The Institute is committed to promoting energy supply systems which are sustainable, economic, safe and socially just. ISE develops materials, components, systems and processes for seven different business areas: Energy-Efficient Buildings and Technical Building Components, Applied Optics and Functional Surfaces, Solar Thermal Technology, Silicon Photovoltaics, Alternative Photovoltaic Technology, Renewable Power Generation and Hydrogen Technology. ISE operates several testing centers for various solar technologies and in the building sector. www.ise.fraunhofer.de

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