

Transportation of components to Noupoort Wind Farm commences

The transportation of turbine components for the Noupoort Wind Farm in the Northern Cape commenced on 19 October.



Savva Antoniadis, Programme Manager for Noupoort Wind Farm

The first wind turbine tower sections departed from Atlantis near Cape Town and wind turbine blades left from the Port of Ngqura in Port Elizabeth.

The locally manufactured turbine tower sections, means that Noupoort Wind Farm has been able to achieve local content commitments exceeding 40% of the project's total value. "We are delighted to be receiving the first of these locally manufactured wind turbine towers at Noupoort Wind Farm. Local content has a vital role to play in the long-term growth and sustainability of South Africa's renewable energy programme," explained Martina Flanagan, project manager for Noupoort Wind Farm.

The wind turbines for the project are supplied by Siemens and the transportation campaign is carried out by DHL and ALE. The turbine towers are the first towers to be manufactured by GRI - Renewable Industries. The R300m facility currently employs 240 people and will increase this figure to 270 during 2016.

Key priority

"Adding local value by supporting development is indeed a key priority for Siemens. In the pursuit of this we have managed to be part of the local manufacturing of key components for the wind farm industry through building a new tower factory in Atlantis. Creating sustainable work opportunities and development within the community," says Janek Winand, head of Wind Power and Renewables at Siemens Southern and Eastern Africa.

The facility is capable of producing 150 turbine towers a year; the first of the 35 towers or 140 sections which will travel to Noupport on the N1 via Worcester, Laingsburg and Beaufort West, a four day journey of 1,000km. "Transportation of turbine components on our roads is not that unusual, considering around 300 turbines have already been successfully installed across South Africa, which is about 2,550 loads," said Flanagan.

Trucks with oversized trailers, varying in size of up to 57m in length, will deliver the various components over the next five months. The wind turbine components weigh 22,000 tons collectively and will travel over 200,000km along three different routes. In addition to the tower sections, the nacelles and hubs will travel a 400km route along the N10 from the Port of Ngqura to Uitenhage, through Graaff-Reinet and Middelburg to Noupport. The 53m long blades will be transported from the same port on the N9 via Cookhouse, Cradock and Middleburg, for 380km en route to Noupport.

Safety measures

All loads will travel to site as single consignments with a rear escort at all times. "The turbine blades have both a front and rear escort in addition to a police escort," explained Flanagan. Escorts provide warning to third party road users of the oncoming abnormal transport and are an important safety measure. All abnormal loads are prohibited from travelling at night, on public holidays or during school holidays.

Transport schedules will available via the wind farm's website, www.noupportwind.co.za, and adverts will be run in local newspapers to assist commuters in their planning.

Noupport Wind Farm spans 7,500ha and comprises thirty five 99m high wind turbines. The site was chosen because of its excellent wind resource, its proximity to national roads for wind turbine transportation, the favourable construction conditions, municipality and local stakeholder support, and studies showed that there would be little environmental impact.

The wind farm is expected to generate approximately 305,000MWh each year of clean, renewable energy to the national grid. When operating at full capacity, it is expected to supply enough green electricity to power approximately 70,000 average South African homes and avoid roughly 300,000 tons of carbon emissions each year when compared to traditional fossil fuel power plants.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>