



## South African Photovoltaic Industry Association

### Skills4PV WG Meeting

**Date: 18 July 2025**

**Time: 13:00 - 14:30**

**Chairperson: Antje Klauss-Vorreiter**

#### **Declaration of Interest and Prevention of Anti-Competitive Behaviour**

Participants of all SAPVIA meetings agree not to engage in or discuss the following topics:

- **Price-Fixing** - current or future prices, pricing strategies, or price changes.
- **Market Division** - allocation of customers, suppliers, territories, or market shares. dividing markets by geographic areas or product lines.
- **Collusive Tendering** - bid-rigging, including agreements on who will submit bids or the terms of bids, information about tender processes or strategies.
- **Production and Supply Control** - agreements to limit or control production, supply, or distribution of products or services, capacity, production quotas, or inventory levels.
- **Boycotts** - agreements to boycott or refuse to deal with specific customers, suppliers, or competitors, collective actions against any market participant.
- **Information Sharing** - competitively sensitive information, including sales volumes, market shares, costs, marketing strategies, future business plans, research and development projects, or investment strategies.
- **Exclusionary Practices** - strategies to exclude competitors from the market or to create barriers to entry, exclusive dealing, tying arrangements, or predatory pricing.
- **Anti-Competitive Agreements** - discussions that could lead to anti-competitive agreements, whether formal or informal, conversations that could be interpreted as attempts to coordinate competitive behaviour.

**Facilitator:** Antje Klauss-Vorreiter (AKV)

**Notes Taker:** Thabang Molai (TM)

#### **Attendees:**

Faure van Schalkwyk (FS)  
Dr Gift Mphefu (GM)  
Jonny Wolfswinkel (WS)  
Renier Wolfswinkel (RW)  
Nico Schoonwinkel (NS)  
Dennis du Plooy (DP)  
Hendrick Volschenk (HV)  
Zvikomborero Garahwa (ZG)  
Tsakani Mashila (TM)  
Marius  
Pieter F (PF)  
Desire Leijen (DL)  
Sinethemba Mguni (SM)  
Zimkita Bilibana (ZB)  
Pamela Gama (PG)  
Ofentse Ntohla (ON)

## Minutes

<b>1.</b>	<b>Opening</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction</b> The chairperson welcomed everyone to the working group meeting and acknowledged attendees for making time to attend.</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> None received.</p> <p><b>Agenda</b> The agenda was adopted with no amendments.</p> <p><b>Minutes</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting proceedings.</p>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Focus</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<p><b>2.1 Discussion of the Seven Questions (PV Green Card Question Paper)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AKV:</li> <li>• Opened the discussion by highlighting that the meeting's purpose was to address seven final open questions in the new theoretical PV assessment document.</li> <li>• Marius was invited to assist in providing input and finalising the responses to Nico's prior questions and comments.</li> <li>• The group worked through the outstanding questions with the goal of agreeing on correct phrasing and final answers.</li> <li>• Consensus was reached on the updates. The document is now considered final.</li> <li>• AKV confirmed that she and ZB will circulate the finalised documents to all assessment centres.</li> <li>• The aim is to send the documents out by Monday at the latest.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the new version of the paper will be the only version used from 1 August onwards.</li> <li>• AKV proposed that Marius make the final changes and share the version with herself, Dr. Gift, and Faure, who will conduct the final review on behalf of the working group.</li> <li>• FS:</li> </ul>	<b>All</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised concerns regarding implementation and training alignment, specifically not all training centres may be fully prepared for the updated content, and that there may be gaps between old training material and the new assessment format, particularly for candidates who previously completed training.</li> <li>• AKV:</li> <li>• Noted that past workshops included almost all training and assessment centres, where it was confirmed that most already teach beyond the previous paper's content.</li> <li>• Suggested discussing this further with Secretariat/GOVCO, especially in the context of aligning with upcoming developments (e.g., new RQF or tender processes).</li> <li>• Regarding candidates who trained under the previous material, AKV acknowledged this as a concern but felt the changes were not substantial enough to pose a major barrier.</li> <li>• DP:</li> <li>• Supported the finalisation and rollout plan, suggesting that a focused workshop (1–2 hours) could address gaps between old and new content, especially where content changes relate to hybrid inverters and lithium batteries.</li> <li>• Reaffirmed that the purpose is collaborative, not to catch anyone out, and emphasized the need to maintain industry-wide knowledge and consistency.</li> <li>• AKV:</li> <li>• Suggested that the standing meeting involving training and assessment centres could be used as the platform to present the changes, ensure shared understanding of the updated content, and address any gaps in preparation or material alignment.</li> <li>• JW raised the question of when Papers B and C would be initiated.</li> <li>• AKV:</li> <li>• Suggested the use of SAPVIA SharePoint to collect questions in preparation for Paper B and C development.</li> <li>• Proposed questions to be collected by the working group via SharePoint before the next meeting.</li> <li>• Chairs to review and screen questions, which will then be circulated to the full group for feedback and comments.</li> <li>• Final decisions and approval can be made during the next meeting, avoiding line-by-line review.</li> <li>• Emphasized the need for everyone's participation and contribution to make this approach work, rather than relying solely on a few individuals.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW suggested that they could use existing questions and simply change the values, rather than starting from scratch.</li> <li>• FS:</li> <li>• Added that some unused questions from the first round may still be valuable, these should form the base stock for Papers B and C.</li> <li>• To reduce workload pressure, FS proposed forming topic-based clusters of training and assessment centres, each responsible for generating 10 questions in assigned areas.</li> <li>• The group agreed and decided to divide tasks among themselves to work on different chapters of a document.</li> <li>• Each training/assessment centre will be responsible for one or two chapters.</li> <li>• Green Solar Academy: Chapter 1 and 2 (Electrical Fundamentals and Solar PV Fundamentals)</li> <li>• SARETEC: Chapter 3 (Site Inspection)</li> <li>• Med-TechEngineers: Chapter 4 (Solar PV System Design)</li> <li>• Noltrix: Chapter 5 (Solar PV Installation)</li> <li>• Sun Cybernetics: Chapter 7 (Installation Compliance)</li> <li>• Nepoworx: Chapter 6 (Inspect and Testing)</li> <li>• The submission deadline for draft questions is 15 August 2025.</li> <li>• This allows the Chairs (Antje, Dr Gift, Faure) to review inputs and prepare a consolidated draft for discussion at the next working group meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>2.2</b>	<p><b>2.2 Workplace Placement/Internship for Trained Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZB:</li> <li>• Opened the item by highlighting SAPVIA's continued commitment to ensuring a smooth transition for PV GreenCard graduates into the workplace. She emphasized the need to develop a structured, collaborative, and functional internship framework for the sector to support practical work experience and job placement.</li> <li>• An ongoing collaboration with the National Business Initiative (NBI) was noted, involving the training of 100 learners, with a goal to place all of them in relevant internships. Zimkita confirmed that stipends for 30 learners have already been secured through discussions with NBI and ABSA.</li> <li>• AKV reiterated that many training providers are in the same position—training young learners and then seeking internship opportunities for them, and invited members to</li> </ul>	<b>Zimkita B</b>

	<p>share their experiences, especially around difficulties in placing interns and barriers faced by host companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TM shared Green Solar Academy's experience with several youth training programs that required placing learners into internships. She highlighted two major challenges including stipend issue - companies may not have the funds to pay interns, and limited access to meaningful work: interns may be given menial tasks that don't utilize their skills and knowledge.</li> <li>• GM:</li> <li>• Shared insights from his experience with interns in electrical maintenance and construction—although not yet in solar PV specifically. He highlighted several challenges that host employers face:</li> <li>• Unclear Roles and Supervision Issues - Learners often see their relationship as being solely with the sponsor (e.g., NBI), which can cause problems with accountability and authority on site. Some learners have been resistant to taking instructions from company supervisors.</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety Responsibilities - The issue of safety and liability is a major concern. Employers typically cover UIF and take on liability for even temporary workers. There must be clarity on who holds this responsibility for interns in case of injury or incidents.</li> <li>• Lack of Commitment from Interns - Some interns abandon the placement after a short time despite the employer's investment in PPE and orientation. This causes financial losses and operational disruption.</li> <li>• Provision of Tools and Equipment- Suggested that programs should provide interns with their own basic tools, as seen in other public sector-driven internship models.</li> <li>• Impact on Productivity- Companies need reliable planning and cannot afford delays caused by training or absenteeism. Commitment and attendance must be guaranteed to avoid disruption to site operations.</li> <li>• Intern Screening and Compliance Requirements - Many sites require medical clearance and training (e.g., working at heights). Without proper screening, interns may be ineligible or unsafe to deploy. Addressing these issues is critical to providing meaningful work and meeting site safety requirements.</li> <li>• JW:</li> <li>• Echoed Gift's concerns, drawing from past experience in the construction sector:</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Drain - Interns can be more of a burden than a help requiring significant training and supervision that slows down site work.</li> <li>• Risk in Solar Context - In the solar PV sector, the risks of working with electricity and at heights are too high. The potential liabilities (e.g., falling through ceilings, shocks) are not worth the risk, which is why his company has avoided interns in solar entirely.</li> <li>• Time is Money - The cost in time and productivity makes hosting interns unviable under current conditions.</li> <li>• ZB:</li> <li>• Noted that while there is a pool of learners ready for placement, there is currently limited information about their qualifications and readiness.</li> <li>• Emphasised the need for a structured vetting process to ensure that interns are both committed and adequately qualified before placement.</li> <li>• AKV:</li> <li>• Highlighted that the original intention for this project was to recruit interns with NQF Level 4 in Electrical Engineering.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that many learners already meet this requirement, and those who do not are currently undergoing PV Installer training (5-day course) followed by a boot camp and PV assessment.</li> <li>• Some learners may also have environments licences and Working at Heights certification, which were identified as critical for field readiness.</li> <li>• TM:</li> <li>• Reinforced that host companies often refuse to accept interns who lack an electrical background due to the time and effort required to train them from scratch.</li> <li>• Emphasised that solar-specific training alone is insufficient without basic electrical understanding, as interns may lack awareness of safety protocols and correct installation procedures.</li> <li>• FS:</li> <li>• Raised concerns that many learners are not well prepared for the workplace or even basic life responsibilities.</li> <li>• A significant portion is motivated only by stipends, not by career aspirations in solar or electrical work.</li> <li>• This results in poor performance, low participation, and substandard assessment results.</li> <li>• There is a disconnect between training institutions (e.g. TVET colleges) and actual workplace readiness.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing this gap requires more than short-term interventions—it demands long-term investment in learner development and realistic program timelines.</li> <li>The group recommends the secretariat implement a robust vetting system for learner commitment, background, and employability.</li> <li>Design a basic reporting and evaluation framework for host companies to ensure learners are exposed to core technical areas.</li> <li>Where gaps are identified in learner readiness, adapt training programs to close these before placements.</li> <li>Acknowledge that meaningful capacitation may require longer-term training and support, not just boot camps or short assessments.</li> </ul>	
<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.3 Meeting Frequency and Rhythm</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The group discussed finding a suitable time and frequency for their meetings.</li> <li>An agreement was reached to keep meetings on Fridays at 13:00, bi-monthly.</li> </ul>	<b>All</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Closure</b>  With a vote of thanks, the chairperson formally closed the meeting.  <i>Next Meeting: 12 September 2025</i>	<b>Chairperson</b>

#### **Action Items:**

<b>No:</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>By whom</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>PV Green Card Question Paper A</b>  1.1 Finalise document changes and proofread.  1.2 Circulate finalised document to training and assessment centres.  1.3 Schedule a brief workshop/meeting to introduce key updates (changes) to the assessment paper, with all the training and assessment centres.	<b>Marius</b>  <b>AKV/ZB</b>  <b>AKV</b>

2.	<p><b>PV Green Card Question Paper B and C</b></p> <p>2.1 Create SAPVIA SharePoint Excel sheet for Paper B &amp; C question collection.</p> <p>2.2 Draft questions on respective (assigned) chapters Deadline: 15 August 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Solar Academy: Chapter 1 and 2 (Electrical Fundamentals and Solar PV Fundamentals)</li> <li>• SARETEC: Chapter 3 (Site Inspection)</li> <li>• Med-TechEngineers: Chapter 4 (Solar PV System Design)</li> <li>• Noltrix: Chapter 5 (Solar PV Installation)</li> <li>• Sun Cybernetics: Chapter 7 (Installation Compliance)</li> <li>• Nepoworx: Chapter 6 (Inspect and Testing)</li> </ul> <p>2.3 Review and compile questions for Papers B &amp; C.</p>	<p><b>ZB</b></p> <p><b>All members</b></p> <p><b>Leadership</b></p>
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