SunSpec Alliance Releases Draft of the First Specification for Renewable Energy Standards for Public Comment

Consortium of Solar Industry Organizations Advance to Next Stage of Achieving Industry Standards for Renewable Energy Deployments

San Jose, CA May 11, 2010 — The SunSpec Alliance, a consortium of companies focused on defining open standards to accelerate the renewable energy industry, today announced that it has delivered its first set of proposed communication standards for equipment used in renewable energy systems. The initial SunSpec specification is now open for public comment, enabling all interested individuals and organizations a chance to review and provide feedback on the proposed standards.

The goal of the SunSpec: Modbus Specification is to create a common language that all renewable energy component manufacturers can adhere to in order to enable interoperability amongst all compliant technologies. In doing so, the SunSpec: Modbus Specification aims to remove the barriers that currently prevent the industry from being able to integrate distributed photovoltaic (PV) power generation systems cost-effectively and on a large-scale basis.

"Federal stimulus funding and state Renewable Portfolio Standards are rapidly driving the adoption of the Smart Grid and renewable sources of energy today. But without standards that enable all solar and renewable energy components to work together, the growth of the industry will continue to be hindered by high costs and non-interoperability," said Tom Tansy, chairman of the SunSpec Alliance. "Just as networking standards were necessary to enable the mass rollout and adoption of the Internet, the SunSpec Alliance is developing renewable energy component standards that will allow equipment from different vendors to interoperate and provide the rich dataset essential to monitoring and management of renewable energy assets."

The primary benefits that the SunSpec Alliance intends to provide the industry include:

Because the SunSpec Alliance is fully committed to open standards and interoperability, the organization seeks to leverage existing standards to the maximum extent possible, and cooperate with other standards bodies and organizations. Such cooperation includes elected representation by the SunSpec Alliance's executive director – John Nunneley – on the Governing Board of NIST's Smart Grid Interoperability Panel (SGIP). From this position, Nunneley is able to participate and liaison across the full spectrum of Smart Grid and renewable energy industry standardization activities.

"Premier Power applauds the efforts of the SunSpec Alliance to bring data standards to the renewable energy industry. Monitoring and reporting of production energy is essential to our operations. By using products that support the SunSpec Alliance standards, we can be confident that they will work together and benefit from the lower cost and increased functionality," said Michel Maxsom, director of operations for Premier Power, a leading solar plant EPC and operator.

Membership in the SunSpec Alliance is open to the full spectrum of industry stakeholders, including project developers, system integrators, PV equipment manufacturers, networking vendors, software companies, monitoring service providers, energy producers and consumers, utilities, other non-profit organizations, and individuals. The Alliance's open collaboration and other operating principles have been modeled after successful consortium and standards-making bodies that enable cooperative efforts on an international scale. The SunSpec Alliance is seeking increased industry support to help define additional equipment standards, data reporting and application interfaces, and testing and certification programs.

Click here to download the SunSpec: Modbus Specification.

For more information about the SunSpec Alliance, please email info@sunspec.org or go to www.sunspec.org.