

Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands

SEIAPI holds Vanuatu Industry members Meeting Pacific Senior Energy Officials Meeting 2025



Further to an insightful Industry members meeting held in Fiji earlier in October, the SEIAPI Executive Officer, Geoff Stapleton organised an Industry members meeting for the Vanuatu solar industry on Monday, 24 November at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT) campus in Port Vila.

27 people attended including representatives from the Vanuatu solar industry, UNELCO Engie (local power utility), National Green Energy Fund (NGEF), Market Development Facility (MDF), Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA), the Department of Energy and electrical trainers from VIT.

The meeting began with a welcome address by Geoff Stapleton. Next, those in attendance introduced themselves. Geoff provided an overview of recent SEIAPI activities and provided an overview of the updated versions of the two off-grid guidelines (design and install) recently completed and released by SEIAPI. There was also a discussion on the strategic plan that SEIAPI is developing.

The workshop included general discussions on issues faced by the solar industry in Vanuatu. From this, SEIAPI has a list of items to follow up on. SEIAPI is planning to collaborate more with the stakeholders, particularly members, to provide an enabling environment to deliver sustainable and high quality RE systems in the Pacific.

Each country has their own challenges, hence, it is important to consult the key players for the betterment of the solar industry. SEIAPI will work towards assisting the solar companies to overcome their challenges through dialogue, collaboration, capacity development and technical support.

The Pacific Regional Senior Energy Officials Meeting (SEOM 2025) was organised by the Pacific Community (SPC) from 19th-21st November at Tanoa International Hotel, in Nadi, Fiji. SEIAPI was represented by the Executive Officer, Geoff Stapleton and Technical Projects Officer, Mosese Nabulivou. The 3-day session covered a wide range of presentations from member countries along with panel sessions with donor partners discussing projects they are supporting in the Pacific energy sector. Sessions included: Country Interventions (Progress on FESRIP implementation & 5th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting (PRETMM) outcome); Energy Policy, Planning and Capacity; Energy Sector Finance and Cooperation; Sustainable Electric Power Development; Low-Carbon Transport Energy & Improved Energy Efficiency.



Over the three days, Pacific senior energy officials and partners participated in:

- Steering committee meetings for the following projects:
 - a. Pacific Adoption of Waste to Energy Solutions Project (PAWES)
 - b. Pacific Energy and Gender Initiative Regional (PEGI RSC)
 - c. Clean Energy Access for Remote Pacific Islands Project (CLEARPICS PSC)
 - d. Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Project (PCREEE PSC)
 - e. EU Electrification Project
- Annual general meeting of the Office of Pacific Energy Regulators Alliance (OPERA)
- Country presentations on their progress on the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific (FESRIP) 2021–2030
- Panel sessions presenting specific projects that are related to specific outcomes of the FESRIP.
- Endorsed the SEOM 2025 Outcome Statement and Terms of Reference for the FESRIP midterm review and the upcoming 2026 6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting (PRETMM)

The meeting reiterated the Pacific’s united vision for a scalable, sustainable, and resilient energy future.

Solar (PV) to power health and education in remote Papua New Guinea



Remote communities in Papua New Guinea's Oro and Central provinces will soon have access to clean, reliable electricity for the first time, transforming healthcare and education services in some of the country's most isolated areas.

The country's first REnew Pacific project, delivered by the Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF), will install solar (PV) system at Sanananda Aid Post and Mt Koiari Flexible Open and Distance Education (FODE) Centre along the Kokoda Track.

In Sanananda, the solar (PV) system will support essential healthcare for the busy aid post which serves up to 7,000 people each year, powering medical equipment, refrigeration, lighting and emergency services. At Mt Koiari, the FODE's 50 enrolled students will benefit from electricity for classrooms, digital learning and satellite internet.

These locally-managed RE systems will replace diesel generators, cutting emissions, reducing costs and improving energy security for years to come.

The project builds on a successful 2025 pilot at Kokoda College and is scaling a model for sustainable, community led renewable electrification. Training in maintenance, governance and gender inclusion will help ensure long-term success.

REnew Pacific is the Australian Government's AUD75 million investment in off-grid renewable energy for rural and remote communities across the Pacific and Timor-Leste, including PNG.

For more information, visit <https://renewpacific.com.au/solar-mini-grids-to-power-health-and-education-in-remote-papua-new-guinea/>

New solar system at Lomaloma Subdivisional Hospital in Vanuabalavu (Fiji)

Extracted from www.fijivillage.com

Power outages and nights without electricity caused by faulty generators are now a thing of the past following the completion of a new solar power system at the Lomaloma Subdivisional Hospital on Vanuabalavu (in Fiji's Lau archipelago).

According to Fiji's Ministry of Health, given the remote location of the facility, the 24/7 power supply provided by the new solar system will transform healthcare delivery on the island, including its nursing stations and health centres.



The new system will be a significant help to doctors, nurses, and patients who present to the facility at night during emergencies. Furthermore, it will reduce reliance on oxygen cylinders, as they can now utilise oxygen concentrator machines to provide oxygen and nebulisation to patients in need.

The scoping, design and installation was done by SEIAPI member, CBS Power Solutions.

The project was funded under the Manaaki grant by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the Fiji Oxygen Programme, a partner of Cure Kids Fiji, which has a long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

For more information, visit: <https://www.fijivillage.com/news/New-solar-power-system-transforms-healthcare-at-Lomaloma-Subdivisional-Hospital-in-Vanuabalavu-5xrf48/>

Protecting the grid from extreme weather

Extracted from PV magazine International (7 November 2025)

IEC Standards can help to make the grid more resilient as the impact of climate change intensifies.

The electricity grid is expected to be increasingly affected by climate change and the resulting severe weather episodes, which are predicted to multiply as our world heats up. Fires, floods, hurricanes and even extreme heatwaves will and are already having an impact on electricity transmission the world over. Recent events in Texas are an example: rapid and intense rainfall damaged critical infrastructure, including substations and transmission lines, leading to both power loss in the affected areas and challenges in restoring full service quickly and effectively.

A grid is considered resilient when it can either withstand the effects of severe weather or, if severe weather does stop it from functioning, when it is able to “bounce back” and restore electricity in the areas that have been deprived of it rapidly and effectively.

The U.S. Department of Energy puts it this way: “Withstanding and quickly recovering from extreme weather events must be a critical function of today’s electric grid.”

IEC Standards play a key role in stating the minimum equipment and installation requirements for electricity to be generated and transmitted to our homes safely. They deal with overhead lines, cables, electrical conductors, insulators, power transformers, to only mention a few.

For the full article, please visit:
<https://www.pv-magazine.com/2025/11/07/protecting-the-grid-from-extreme-weather/>



Image: dfat.gov.au

Cows, Jamaica, & Solar — Winning The Clean Energy Revolution

Extracted from:

<https://cleantechnica.com/2025/11/11/cows-jamaica-solar-winning-the-clean-energy-revolution/>



If ever there was a case for using solar, it is on the thousands of inhabited islands around the world. Ordinarily, they import coal, diesel fuel, or LNG to fuel thermal generating stations, which makes the electricity they provide very expensive.

Jamaica recently got hammered by Hurricane Melissa, but many homes and businesses on the island have installed rooftop solar systems that survived the fierce winds and continued to provide power after the storm passed. Jennifer Hue lives close to Treasure Beach, one of the communities that was pummeled by the hurricane. She told the New York Times that she woke up the next day to devastation, but her roof was intact and so were the solar panels she had installed two years ago. Her home soon became a place where neighbors could come to recharge their cell phones so they could communicate with family and friends.

Rooftop solar has grown significantly in Jamaica over the past decade. In 2014, there were 1.4 megawatts available on the island. Today, there are 65 megawatts, about 10 percent of Jamaica’s demand.

Jason Robinson is the owner of Solar Buzz, an installer based in Kingston. He reports none of his more than 300 customers suffered more than minor damage to their systems, which in the tropics are usually mounted close to the roof itself. He said some homeowners remove their panels before a storm hits and reinstall them after it passes. “As long as you install to code, and your roof stays on, you have a chance of surviving extremely long power outages. Resiliency is becoming even more important than lowering your bill.”

Australians to get at least three hours a day of free solar power - even if they don't have solar panels

Australian households in three states will be promised access to at least three hours a day of free solar power, regardless of whether they have rooftop panels, the federal government has announced.

The “solar sharer” offer will be available to homes with smart meters – which is the majority of homes – in New South Wales, south-east Queensland and South Australia from July next year, with other areas to potentially follow in 2027.

The government said Australians could schedule appliances such as washing machines, dishwashers and air conditioners and charge electric vehicles and household batteries during this time.

The solar sharer scheme would be implemented through a change to the default market offer that sets the maximum price retailers can charge customers for electricity in parts of the country.

The climate change and energy minister, Chris Bowen, said the program would ensure “every last ray of sunshine was powering our homes” instead of some solar energy being wasted. Australians have installed more than 4m solar systems and there is regularly cheap excess generation in the middle of the day. Part of the rationale for the program is that it could shift demand for electricity from peak times – particularly early in the evening – to when it is sunniest.

This could help minimise peak electricity prices and reduce the need for network upgrades and intervention to ensure the power grid was stable.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/nov/03/australians-to-get-at-least-three-hours-a-day-of-free-solar-power-even-if-they-dont-have-solar-panels>

International Conference

6th International Conference on Solar Technologies and Hybrid Mini-Grids to improve energy access

SAVE THE DATE

8-10 April 2026, Mallorca, Spain

www.energy-access-conferences.com

Standards Corner

In recent months, SEIAPI has been conducting webinars related to the current Australia and New Zealand Standards and we will arrange similar webinars for the USA National Electrical Code. To supplement these webinars, the newsletter includes this 'standards' corner highlighting an installation identified during a site visit in the Pacific that does not comply with relevant standards, SEIAPI guidelines or international best practices.



The above photo illustrates joints in an array cable placed underground that could not be enclosed properly in conduits due to the use of connectors wrapped in plastic which later burnt, putting the system out of power. This does not comply with the following standard requirements:

- AS/NZS 5033:2021 4.4.5.1(a) - Where conduit systems are used, all parts shall be sealed appropriately (by using methods such as glue) unless otherwise stated by the manufacturer.
- AS/NZS 5033:2021 4.4.2.5 - Special cables having a higher protection against mechanical stress and ingress of water or appropriate protection measures shall be provided, where a cable is installed underground.

In addition, underground conduit should be at a minimum depth of 500mm (where there is no surface covering) in accordance with AS/NZS 3000 Clause 3.11.4.4.

However, it is a best practice to use a single conductor (one-piece) and avoid joints in array cable using connectors especially in underground installations. The issue above would not have happened if a single conductor (one-piece) was used. The connectors used could not be placed inside the conduits and it was wrapped in plastic which did not fully prevent water ingress and represents a substandard and a noncompliant practice. Such practices represent poor workmanship and should always be avoided. This also accumulates the operation and maintenance costs for the system.

For more updates, please visit <http://www.seiapi.com> or email on info@seiapi.com or secretariat@seiapi.com for any queries and comments. Follow us on LinkedIn - Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands - SEIAPI LinkedIn page