

Ford SA switches on 30,000 solar panels at Ranger factory

Ford South Africa has turned on 30, 226 solar panels at its Silverton Assembly Plant in Pretoria, which means that 35% of the factory's electricity comes directly from the sun. The Silverton Assembly Plant produces the Ranger pickup for domestic sales and exports to over 100 global markets.



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“This pioneering project is the result of a long-term power purchase agreement with SolarAfrica, with the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) carports for 3,610 vehicles at the Silverton plant.

“SolarAfrica’s innovative, large-scale solar array uses a total of 30,226 solar panels to generate 13.5MW of emissions-free electricity for the Silverton plant. This makes it one of the largest solar carports in the world,” Ford South Africa said in a statement.

The installation took 599 days and 35,000 man-hours to complete and supported 121 jobs amongst sub-contractors involved in the construction and installation. Approximately 59 tons of steel and 315 tons of aluminium were used for the locally manufactured solar carports.



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More than 5,000m of medium and low-voltage cabling was used to connect the solar PV panels to 120 three-phase 100kW inverters and eight transformers, before being fed into the Silverton plant. The system is capable of producing 13.5MW of power – which is equivalent to powering almost 224,000 light bulbs, or 12 171 average households, for an entire year.

“More significantly from an environmental perspective, the solar PV array will eliminate the equivalent of 20,072 tons of CO2 generated per annum, which is a major step toward achieving Ford’s carbon-free emissions targets by 2035,” Ford South Africa added.

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