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Solar Energy UK:

**The BBA and Photovoltaik-Institut Berlin present new rating report service for solar power plants**

Photovoltaik-Institut Berlin (PI Berlin) and British certification body the BBA are unveiling a new inspection process for solar power plants at the Solar Energy UK exhibition. The PQ Rating provides a rapid overview of the strengths and weaknesses of PV power plants, supporting stakeholders – including investors – on the secondary PV market to make acquisition decisions, and providing sellers with plant inspection reports to improve their sales prospects. The PQ Rating facilitates the decision-making process by evaluating projects on a scale of one to ten and by providing both a detailed report and a chart-based summary.

“In the UK, existing PV power plants frequently change owners. However, investors are only willing to commit money and banks only agree to refinance projects if they have technical assurance of a plant’s quality. This is why we have joined forces with the renowned PI Berlin to develop a rating system to give buyers and lenders peace of mind,” explains Claire Curtis-Thomas, Chief Executive at the BBA, one of the UK’s leading certification bodies. “Since the aim of our inspection report is to make the lives of decision-makers as easy as possible, the document opens with a comprehensive two-page overview. In less than a minute, prospective buyers and lenders can see how promising or risky the solar power plant in question really is.” The experts compile the summary by analysing project documentation and performing an on-site assessment of the plant based on more than 1,300 test criteria.

**New PQ Rating process – performance beyond compliance**

The PQ Rating, which is short for Photovoltaic Plant – Performance and Quality Inspection, is particularly suitable for large-scale PV power plants with outputs of 1 megawatt (MW) or more. The expert report awards points for each of the parameters being inspected, which range from the quality of the contractual agreements, the plant layout and installation, to the module quality and overall performance. Assigned different weightings, these points are used to calculate a rating of between one and ten, which places the power plant into one of three classes. If the PV project scores less than the minimum threshold, the experts classify it as carrying too much risk. The process differs from that of other expert reports by including commercially relevant aspects also, and by rating performance beyond simple compliance.

Claire Curtis-Thomas adds “The BBA and PI Berlin have exceptional synergy in this area, and we are excited to offer this unique new product”.

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<http://www.pi-berlin.com/en/pq-rating-report.html>



The PQ Rating certifies the quality of PV power plants



A PI Berlin engineer inspecting a PV power plant



A PI Berlin engineer inspecting a PV power plant



A PI Berlin engineer taking thermographic images



“With the BBA, we have found a first-class partner for the British market. Whilst the BBA has strong brand recognition and a well-established reputation for providing inspection and certification services in the UK, we have brought our long-standing experience in large-scale PV power plants to the table,” comments Steven Xuereb, Head of the PV Systems Business Unit at PI Berlin. PI Berlin was co-founded by Dr Paul Grunow, who also helped establish photovoltaics manufacturer Q-Cells. “Our interdisciplinary team has many years of experience in the solar industry. Since we have our own accredited laboratory for testing solar modules and, unlike many other consultants, also conduct research in the field of photovoltaics, banks regularly draw on our knowledge,” adds Xuereb. PI Berlin has already provided support for projects with a total rated output of over two gigawatts (GW) world-wide.

**Exhibition stand** at Solar Energy UK: I58

**Interview opportunities** at the exhibition:

Steven Xuereb, Head of the PV Systems Business Unit at PI Berlin, and Patrick Maxwell, PQ Rating Project Manager at the BBA, will be delighted to talk to you at the exhibition.

## About the BBA

The BBA is a highly-respected independent UK certification body, providing assessments of construction products and systems and approval of installers. Since 1966, the BBA has developed testing, inspection and certification services to help manufacturers and installers achieve excellence, and provide reassurance to the industry. Carried out by teams with detailed technical knowledge and experience, BBA certification and inspection services are recognised by building control, local authorities, specifiers, industry insurers and the key construction trade associations in the UK. The BBA is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), performing tests in accordance with the ISO/IEC 17025 standard and certification in accordance with ISO/IEC 17065. It is a product approval Certification Body for the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS).

[www.bbacerts.co.uk](http://www.bbacerts.co.uk)

## About PI Berlin

The Photovoltaik-Institut Berlin provides independent, expert advice on designing, constructing and operating PV power plants worldwide. With its experienced team of researchers and engineers, the institute offers a wide range of design and test services with a focus on quality assurance in complex PV projects. PI Berlin has already provided support for projects with a total rated output of over two gigawatts (GW) worldwide.

The institute also has an IEC-accredited test laboratory at its Berlin site for checking the performance, reliability and resistance of solar modules. Another test laboratory is located in Suzhou, China.

[www.pi-berlin.com](http://www.pi-berlin.com)



Thermal imaging uncovering defects in solar modules



An electroluminescence test showing numerous cell fractures in a solar module



Steven Xuereb, Head of the PV Systems Business Unit at PI Berlin



Claire Curtis-Thomas, Chief Executive at the BBA



Logo PI-Berlin



Logo BBA