

CT's Golden Arrow Bus Services achieves zero energy bill

As part of its ongoing sustainability and carbon footprint reduction initiatives, Cape Town's 159-year-old Golden Arrow Bus Services installed solar panels at its central engineering complex, Multimech. The industrial site has since reduced its electricity account by 71% over the last three years.



Solar farm at Golden Arrow bus depot

The initiative is part of a multi-year collaboration between Golden Arrow, New Southern Energy and the City of Cape Town.

The first phase of the project, which began in 2017, comprised a small installation of solar panels on Multimech's roof. During the second and third phases of the project, the number of panels was increased to almost 2,500 with the capacity to generate approximately 1,200 kilowatt hours per year. The final installation was completed during October 2019 and since then, the site has consumed only 46% of the electricity generated by the system and exported the balance to the City of Cape Town for use elsewhere. As a net exporter of electricity, Multimech is now classified as a green facility.

A solar system of this nature has an estimated lifespan of 20-25 years and projections indicate financial savings exceeding R80m over its lifespan.

Ethically, financially sound investment

According to Gideon Neethling, Golden Arrow Company engineer, this project has provided an impetus for future projects and innovations. "Sustainable energy generation is a key part of Golden Arrow's future; we believe that this is not only an ethically, but also financially sound investment and we are excited to see how we can expand these initiatives in future," he says. Such projects include the recently completed upgrading of the lighting at the company's largest depot, Arrowgate and the installation of a solar car port which will generate close to 295,000 Wh per year.

“This project is a perfect example of a phased approach that enables a facility to work towards a more sustainable future over time. The collaboration with the City of Cape Town means that it will benefit people throughout the city for many years to come,” said David Masureik, CEO of New Southern Energy.

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