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Saft Partners with Apollo Solar on US DOE 'Solar Energy Grid Integration Systems' Contract

BETHEL, Connecticut--(BUSINESS WIRE) – September 4, 2009 - Saft, world leader in the design, development and manufacture of high-end batteries for industry and defense, is supplying a state-of-the-art lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery system to provide energy storage for one of the 'Solar Energy Grid Integration Systems' (SEGIS) projects funded by the US Department of Energy (DOE). Saft is working in collaboration with Apollo Solar, a company specializing in the design and manufacture of power electronics for solar energy systems, which has just been awarded a contract for the second design phase of SEGIS to deliver a working prototype of a less expensive, more efficient Smart Grid inverter.

The objective of the SEGIS program, managed by Sandia National Laboratories, is to develop high performance products that will allow photovoltaics to become a more integral part of household and commercial Smart-Energy systems.

Apollo Solar has been selected by the DOE to design and develop a cost competitive and more efficient Smart Grid inverter to enhance the value of solar electric systems to home and business users. The innovative design will incorporate energy storage and two-way communications between solar electrical systems and utilities.

The role of the Saft Li-ion battery system, which will be sized at around 10 kWh, will be to provide efficient energy storage that will enable the solar energy to be effectively 'time shifted' to make it available for home consumption during periods of peak demand, or for injection into the grid when needed either for support or when it will generate the most economic value. Saft is already demonstrating this approach in SOL-ION, a Franco-German project dedicated to the development of a new concept in energy conversion and storage for grid connected photovoltaic (PV) systems in Europe.

"The SEGIS program aims to maximize the value of distributed solar electric generation, offer greater control of electricity consumption and its cost and to anticipate the emergence of future smart grids," says John Pfeifer, President and CEO of Apollo Solar. "The inclusion of Li-ion energy storage and its capability for time-shifting was therefore a key success factor in our project proposal."

This contract means that the partnership is well-positioned to progress to the next phase of SEGIS, which will focus on the field demonstration, deployment, and commercialization of the products being developed.

About Apollo Solar

Apollo Solar provides premium solar photovoltaic power electronics in a full line of inverters, charge controllers, and communications modules integrated into solar power centers designed for fast, fail-safe

installation and use. With more than 40 years of experience in the design and manufacture of power systems for numerous industrial Fortune 500 clients, as well as NASA and the US military, Apollo Solar is known for its exclusive built-in energy performance meters, wireless remote data monitoring, and webbased upgrade capabilities. Apollo Solar specializes in robust thermal design and optimal solar energy harvest, both of which increase performance, enhance reliability, and reduce both upfront and life-of-system cost.

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