

## **ARTsolar Confident that it Complies**

- **Reputational damage has been inflicted upon ARTsolar.**
- **ARTsolar complies with all of requirements of it's funding agreement with the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (IDC)**
- **ARTsolar has sought relief from the Durban High Court to protect its reputation.**

Recent media reports have cast unfounded aspersions on the reputation of ARTsolar, a local manufacturer, assembler, distributor and installer of solar related products which was founded in 2010.

The core function of the business is to supply to government funded projects which require local content as per the national legislation. Part of the business model is also the private supply and installation of solar related products to commercial and domestic environments. In some instances, where there is limited volume, ARTsolar supplies solar panels that are more cost effective, however ARTsolar's warranties and quality control remain in effect.

In 2020 ARTsolar, approached the IDC for funding, to upgrade the manufacturing equipment to enable ARTsolar to provide the most technologically relevant modules to Independent Power Producers (IPP's). This assembly line was commissioned in 2023.

It is a condition of this arrangement that ARTsolar submit financial documentation monthly to the IDC which includes its business plans and stock valuation records. In addition, the IDC inspects the plant on a regular basis. The IDC is in possession of ARTsolar's financial and other information dating back to 2022 and as such is able to investigate both its historic and current business operations and practices. To date, ARTsolar has made 8 drawdowns, all of which have been approved by the IDC after strict compliance with the agreement as well as an inspection and sign off by IDC representatives. ARTsolar welcomes any further investigation by the IDC to establish compliance with the conditions of the funding.

Any modules that are imported from abroad undergo stringent testing to pass all technical minimum specifications and requirements at the ARTsolar facilities. This ensures that they are of the highest quality.

From August 2022 until June 2023, ARTsolar was engaged in discussion with Oxford Family Supermarkets (PTY) Ltd, a private commercial client. This installation was completed in September 2023 and subsequently all payments were received and the contract completed.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 ARTsolar received correspondence from a representative of Oxford Family Supermarkets (PTY) Ltd, requesting information on the origins of the panels that had been installed at Oxford Freshmarket Hillcrest. A response was sent by ARTsolar's commercial manager on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 addressing the queries. ARTsolar received no further correspondence in this regards and became the victim of defamatory remarks over a year later.

Since that time there have been several instances of defamatory remarks made regarding ARTsolar and representatives of the company, both in the media and in other correspondence.

The agreement between ARTsolar and Oxford Family Supermarkets (PTY) Ltd makes allowance for dispute resolution, yet these processes have not been exercised and at no stage has the client requested any refund or compensation for the work that was carried out by ARTsolar.

The timing of the defamatory allegations, along with the finding of malice were undoubtedly relevant considerations for the Court hearing the interdict as well as the fact that the Oxford Family Supermarkets (PTY) Ltd had legal avenues to follow, but rather opted pursue their agenda through the media.

ARTsolar respects the rule of law and as such has intentionally chosen not to argue its position in the media. Despite an interim interdict that was issued on the 26th March by the Durban High Court, that interdicted Messrs Latimer, Hansraj and Hans, as well as Ms Singh from making written or verbal comments or statements concerning ARTsolar, several new reports have appeared that have recycled the very allegations that were found to be prima facie, defamatory and made with malice. The return date for the application is the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

In most cases an emotive headline referring to a “Gagging Order” has been used. At no stage has it been ARTsolar’s intention to “Gag” the media where legitimate processes are followed that present a balanced view of the issues in question. The order was sought rather, to prevent the malicious, defamatory and distorted narratives that appear to be motivated by personal vendettas.

ARTsolar respects the rule of law and will consider its legal position, as it is entitled to, with regard to court decisions and not undermine this process by arguing the merits of the case in the media. No further comment on this matter will be made until the outcome of the Court case.