

Corporate News

centrotherm photovoltaics extends silicon expertise: subsidiary presents new crystallization furnace

Blaubeuren, April 27, 2009 – centrotherm SiTec GmbH, a one hundred percent subsidiary of centrotherm photovoltaics AG, is launching a new crystallization furnace for the manufacture of multi-crystalline ingots on the market, and supplementing the centrotherm photovoltaics Group's range of products in the ingot production area. The high-performance furnace is distinguished by a higher output compared to existing models on the market, and is already in the testing phase. The performance parameters achieved so far exceed expectations at this stage. In addition to significantly optimized energy usage, the crystallization furnace provides a solid basis for future, modular extensions. The first crystallization furnaces are set to be supplied to customers in the first half of 2010, which is an ideal time for market launch as the markets are expected to recover significantly in 2010 following the general economic downturn in the wake of the global financial crisis. centrotherm SiTec is currently already experiencing constantly growing demand for crystallization and wafer solutions as both individual equipment and complete production facilities. Together with the crystallization furnace, centrotherm SiTec also provides facility design, engineering services, process technology for crystallization and the key process equipment required for this. This comprehensive portfolio once again demonstrates the centrotherm photovoltaics Group's high level of performance in providing technology, process know-how and key equipment as a one-stop-shop solution.

In the crystallization furnace, polysilicon particles are initially smelted in a quartz crucible at over 1450°C. The smelted silicon is then turned into multi-crystalline ingots based on the principle of directional solidification. Bars and wafers, which are required to manufacture solar cells and solar modules, can then be sawn from these crystallized silicon blocks. The crystallization furnace contains up to 450 kg of polysilicon, and has an optimized hot zone for a quartz crucible of 880mm x 880mm x 420 mm, which allows for an efficient silicon smelting process and optimized crystallization process management. "With our innovative development work, we are continuously expanding the centrotherm photovoltaics Group's range of products in the silicon area," explained Dr. Albrecht Mozer, Managing Director of centrotherm SiTec. "The crystallization furnace represents a further

milestone of our in-house product development. It confirms the decision to bundle the centrotherm photovoltaics Group's silicon expertise under the roof of centrotherm SiTec.”

About centrotherm photovoltaics AG

centrotherm photovoltaics AG, which is based at Blaubeuren, is one of the world's leading technology and service providers for the manufacturing of solar cells and solar silicon. The broad product spectrum comprises key equipment and turnkey production lines for crystalline and thin-film solar cells. The product range is supplemented by reactors and converters for the manufacturing of solar silicon. centrotherm photovoltaics guarantees its customers important performance parameters such as production capacity, degree of efficacy, and completion deadlines for turnkey lines. The Group employs over 1,000 staff members, and operates in Europe, Asia and the USA. In the 2008 financial year, centrotherm photovoltaics generated revenue of EUR 375 million and EBIT of EUR 56 million*, and is listed in the TecDAX on the Frankfurt Securities Exchange. (*before purchase price allocation)

centrotherm photovoltaics AG

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