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Presenter biographies

Data, Decisions and Disputes: Powering Energy-Intensive Users in a Liberalising Electricity Market.



Prof. Willem den Heijer, Samancor Chrome Limited.

Willem is the Energy Manager at Samancor Chrome where he manages the efficient use and associated costs of energy across the Samancor's various smelting and mining business units. This includes the strategic identification, management and mitigation of risks and opportunities in the energy market and related landscape. He has 29 years of experience in energy management, carbon management, renewable energy, and measurement and verification in the industrial and mining sectors. He has a PhD degree in Mechanical Engineering and holds the position of Extraordinary Professor at North-West University. He was recently appointed to the Electricity Market Advisory Forum by NERSA, where he represents the Ferro Alloy Producers Association.



Robert Futter, Florion.

Robert has worked for the Cresco Group for over 20 years across a multitude of industries, with a strong focus on energy, mining and infrastructure. Over the past 10 years, he has been delivering decarbonisation solutions for energy users, encompassing energy strategy/procurement, project development and implementation support. Based on market developments and client needs, Robert has established Florion to provide an Energy Management Platform – initially focused on larger energy users to manage the implementation of the decarbonisation strategy. Robert is a qualified CA with extensive financial modelling expertise across a range of industries, along with strong experience in strategic business development services for start-up and technology entities.



Andrew Murray, Switch.

Andrew is CEO of Switch Energy, a technology company specialising in smart metering, electricity trading and wheeling software for utilities and energy market participants. He has spent the past 7 years working in the renewable-energy and smart utility management space. Andrew holds a Master's degree (cum laude) in sustainable development planning and management from Stellenbosch University. His research explored South Africa's energy transition and the integration of energy trading and wheeling technologies using strategic niche management and multi-level perspective frameworks. He examined blockchain-based electricity trading and innovative financing platforms for solar infrastructure.



Mila Vicquery, Energy Partners.

Mila is General Manager of Sustainability (Platform & Consulting) at Energy Partners, where she leads the development of data-driven energy and ESG solutions for large commercial and industrial client portfolios. She oversees the Syntiro digital platform, supporting organisations with energy performance monitoring, cost optimisation and sustainability reporting across complex operations. With over 18 years' experience in energy analytics, sustainability strategy, financial modelling and digital platform development, her work focuses on helping organisations reduce energy costs, manage carbon emissions and improve decision-making in SA's evolving electricity market. She holds a Global Executive MBA from SDA Bocconi and the University of Toronto, and a master's degree in economics from the University of Belgrade.



Tyron Theessen, Webber Wentzel.

Tyron leads Webber Wentzel's Projects & Construction practice and advises on high value, complex infrastructure and energy developments across South Africa and the Sub Sahara Africa region. With deep expertise in corporate, mining, property, infrastructure and energy, he delivers strategic, commercially focused advice on engineering and construction contracts, project structuring, and dispute resolution and avoidance. Tyron acts for prominent owners, sponsors, funders and contractors, affording him a broad understanding of the drivers of the key industry players. His recent work includes advising the contractor on the landmark Naos 1 transaction, SA's largest hybrid solar and battery project for a private off-taker. His expertise has been recognised by Chambers Global, Legal 500, Best Lawyers and IFRL1000.



Michael Udell, Florion.

Michael Udell is a digital product strategist with a track record of using technology to solve complex business challenges. His experience spans both corporate leadership and start-up ventures, operating at EXCO level and founding and scaling technology businesses. Michael focuses on designing digital products that translate complex data into practical tools for better decision-making. The digital advertising, platforms, and services business he co-founded was successfully acquired by Accenture, where he spent 3 years following the acquisition. He is a co-founder of Florion, building intelligent software platforms that help large energy users navigate the renewable energy transition through better data, insight and strategic decision support.