

Press note – for immediate release...

**MERC organizes a workshop on “Efficiency and load shifting opportunities in small and large air-conditioning systems**

Recognizing the importance of the Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) end-use in commercial, public, industrial and residential sectors in the state, Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) organized a workshop on air-conditioning system partnering with the distribution utilities in greater Mumbai area. The Consultation Workshop was organized by MERC on 18 December 2009 at National Stock Exchange building in the commercial district of Bandra Kurla Complex. The purpose of the workshop was to deliberate on challenges faced in improving energy efficiency and load shifting, discuss market and technology perspectives and learn from exemplary case studies. The workshop was attended by 150 participants comprising of consumers of utilities in Mumbai and Thane, utility representatives and MERC officials. Consumers from Mumbai and Thane included large energy users such as Municipal Corporation, banks, hospitals, builders and developers, aviation catering services, telecom industry, Mumbai airports authority, SMEs, shopping malls, petroleum, refineries and chemical industries. The workshop included discussions on shifting load from afternoon peak to night time when the cost of electricity is lowest. Other topics deliberated upon included saving energy in home-based ventilation systems such ceiling fans, air-conditioners, large air-conditioning systems installed in hospitals, large banks, industries. A specific session during the workshop also included discussion on technology innovations in the small commercial offices and solar air-conditioning systems.

The workshop participants benefited from the keynote address delivered by Mr. V. P. Raja, Chairman MERC and a high-level panel discussion in a final session. Several action items were identified during the final panel discussion. As a next step, MERC will advise utilities to work with their consumers to reduce peak time electricity use, promote star-labelled products in the home systems, specifically the ceiling fans, air-conditioners and refrigerators. The panellists suggested proactive steps by the distribution utilities to promote Energy Conservation Building Codes to reduce energy footprint of the buildings, create design audit cells to provide diagnostic support to new residential and commercial buildings and would review utility tariffs that support conservation and reduced purchase of costly power. MERC will also be advising urban local bodies in Maharashtra to implement municipal DSM programs that would benefit the citizens save energy.

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