



# ENERGY

FOCUS

A NEWSLETTER BY THE INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSION

## REFORMING THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR

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Tariff Rate Review

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# NARUC PROVIDES PEER-TO-PEER FORUM ON TARIFF RATE REVIEW



*(NARUC Team meets IRC Dominica)*

**The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) hosted a peer-to-peer forum in Dominica from December 11th-13th, 2023 on cost-reflective electricity tariffs.**

The meeting was aimed at enhancing the processes of the Independent Regulatory Commission (IRC), during the review and application of new electricity rates for the Dominica Electricity Services (DOMLEC) Ltd.

Both IRC and DOMLEC staff participated in the forum, which was funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The sessions focused on **Regulatory Framework for Tariff Setting and Review; Key Concepts, Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities and Key Considerations; and Public and Stakeholder Engagement Methods.**

The IRC reported on the status of its tariff review of 2023, providing insight on successes, challenges, and considerations for change.

The intention is to adopt a new tariff structure, with the introduction of subcategories to better reflect the changes that evolved in the marketplace over the years. NARUC facilitators provided an overview of best practices for determining revenue requirements surrounding the concept of performance-based rates.

**The discussion will be useful for IRC's planned introduction of penalties for low power factor and new rates for high voltage-metered connections.**

**The final day covered a simulated rate case exercise focusing on public notice and plan for transparency. NARUC chose this focus in response to the IRC's request for best practices on public consultation processes, as the IRC plans to begin public consultations on the rate/tariff review for DOMLEC in 2024**

The facilitators were David Morton- former chairman and CEO of British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC), and Matthew Muldoon- manager of accounting and finance in the Rates, Safety and Utility Performance Division of the Public Utility Commission of Oregon.

Key staff of DOMLEC who participated in the sessions were Clyde Edwards- Chief Financial Officer, Paul Moses- Commercial Manager, Solange Eustache-Aaron- Billing Supervisor and Quentin Gregoire- Accountant.



*(L-R) Justinn Kase, Jason Timothy, David Morton and Matthew Muldoon prepare for a mock rate case.*

# CARICOM DEVELOPMENT FUND OFFICIAL MEETS IRC TO DISCUSS GEOTHERMAL PROJECT



*(L-R) Kenrick Burke of CARICOM Development Fund, Mr. Kase and Mr. Timothy.*

**An official of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) met with IRC's staff on December 5th, 2023, to discuss the ongoing geothermal project.**

Kenrick Burke- programme specialist for Sustainable Energy at the CDF – visited Dominica to assess the readiness of the proposed geothermal plant and possible challenges, ahead of funding by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) for a proposed geothermal plant..

Mr. Burke met with IRC's Executive Director- Justinn Kase and Projects Officer- Jason Timothy.



# PROGRESS ON ELECTRICITY RATE REVIEW FOR DOMLEC



**IRC has completed Phase one of the Electricity Rate Review Process with the Dominica Electricity Services Ltd (DOMLEC).**

**Phase one consists of the filing and review of DOMLEC's tariff-related documents.**

Phase two will include the finalization of the rate review process, after consultations with the public.

The IRC anticipates the completion of related outstanding tasks by DOMLEC in the second quarter of 2024. DOMLEC will then proceed to furnish the Commission with its Notice of Intent to File for new rates.

This will initiate a sixty (60)-day final review period, in accordance with both the Electricity Supply Act 2006 (#10 of 2006) and the Tariff Regime Decision Document for DOMLEC.

The tariff-related documents that required review by IRC as part of the rate review process were:

- DOMLEC's Load Research and Investment Plan
- Rate of Return Study
- Depreciation Study
- Revenue Requirements and Cost of Service Study and
- Rate Proposal

**The IRC encourages the public to attend and participate in its public consultations on DOMLEC's rate proposals, since the determination of rates will affect every category of electricity customers.**

# REGULATIONS STAFF MEETS TARIFF CONSULTANT FOR WORKING SESSIONS IN MARTINIQUE

IRC's Executive Director and its Regulations Staff held working sessions in Fort De France, Martinique with the IRC's Tariff Consultant, Ms. Lamis Aljounaidi from September 17-22, 2023.



**Photo caption: Senior Regulations Staff meet with Lamis Aljounaidi at AFD's Fort-De-France office.**

These sessions aimed to finalize the review of DOMLEC's tariff-related documents on the electricity rate review, as the consultancy period was coming to an end.

The consultancy involved analyzing financial documents related to DOMLEC's operations, to assess and advise on what should be factored in the determination of critical parameters that feed into the calculations for new rates. The team hailed a successful wrap-up session with Ms. Aljounaidi. She offered to provide further assistance pro bono towards the successful realization of the electricity rate review.

Ms. Aljounaidi was appointed in 2022, through the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), for the IRC's review process of DOMLEC's electricity rates. The period of her consultancy was from September 2022-October 2023. The consultancy was financed by the Caribbean Investment Facility Grant of the European Union, with funds disbursed through the AFD.

# FEATURE PROFILE

## Regulatory Consultant:

Lamis Aljounaidi



**Lamis Aljounaidi is a regulatory economist based in France.**

She has been engaged with IRC as its tariff consultant for the Rate Review for DOMLEC. Aljounaidi has over 16 years' experience in energy infrastructure development and economics, focused on renewable energy and networks. Part of that expertise was obtained through her employment with AFD, the World Bank and French energy regulator – Commission de Régulation de L'Energie (CRE).

She founded Paris Infrastructure Advisory (PIA), which provides support in electricity market and regulatory design, revenue generation, and tariff design. She has led several assignments in electricity market design in other developing countries.

IRC initially engaged Tractebel, of which Aljounaidi was part of the consulting team, from 2018 to 2020.

During that stint, she provided technical assistance to the IRC in various areas including electricity demand forecasts, tariff/rate structure and the geothermal project Power Purchase Agreement review from a regulatory perspective.



Lamis Aljounaidi is a regulatory economist based in France. The PIA provides support in electricity market and regulatory design, revenue generation, and tariff design.

# CRC OBSERVES ONE YEAR



*Pointe Michel Townhall Meeting held in June 2023*

**October 11, 2023, marked the one-year anniversary of the IRC's re-establishment of its Consumer Relations Committee (CRC).**

During its first year, October 2022 to October 2023, the CRC focused on community awareness building, as it sought to engage and educate the public on the mandate of the IRC.

Three town hall meetings were held during that year. The communities of Mahaut (Saint Paul Parish), Pointe Michel (Saint Luke Parish) and Calibishie (Saint Andrew Parish) benefited from these meetings.

Additional outreach programmes and initiatives were executed by individual CRC representatives during the year. These included meetings with village councils; walk-throughs in their respective parishes; and, speaking engagements at several school PTA Meetings around the island, with the St. Martin's Primary School, Newtown Primary School, Grand Bay Primary School, Temple SDA Primary School, and Dublanc/Bioche Primary School.

During September to October 2023, the IRC launched a 'Meet Your CRC Representative' feature of each of the 10 representatives on social media and online and print news publications, to improve public awareness of that vital consumer representative body.



***Mahaut Townhall Meeting held in April 2023***

# IRC MONITORS DOMLEC'S LOAD SHEDDING PROGRAMME

DOMLEC's capacity needs and fulfillment of electricity demand is being monitored closely, considering the company's load shedding programme.

DOMLEC implemented a series of load shedding schedules in September 2023, in response to limitations in its current capacity that were as a result of unforeseen circumstances, added to inadequate generation maintenance practices.

IRC, DOMLEC and the Government of Dominica have been exploring long-term solutions to address the shortfall in electricity generation capacity.

In 2016, the IRC approved a 1.5-megawatt (MW) diesel generation plant for DOMLEC. Out of the 16.5 MW generation allowed, DOMLEC successfully commissioned this 1.5 MW generation in 2020. In 2020, the IRC also approved a generation license for a 10 MW geothermal plant for the Dominica Geothermal Development Company (DGDC). In 2022, in compliance with the National Energy Policy, the IRC awarded DOMLEC the project to develop a 5-MW Solar Plant at Tarou. DOMLEC is now considering its options for the implementation of this proposed solar plant.

Efforts to alleviate the load shedding situation of the latter part of 2023 involved sourcing of temporary options of increased capacity by DOMLEC, and the Government of Dominica. In November, DOMLEC secured a 3-megawatt generator leased from Aggreko LTD. A team from Aggreko traveled to Dominica on November 12th, 2023, to install and configure the system. Commissioning of generator was targeted for the end of November 2023.

# IRC JOINS GEOTHERMAL RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GRAC)

**The IRC has joined a Geothermal Resource Advisory Committee formed by the Ministry for Planning, Economic Development, Climate Resilience, Sustainable Development, and Renewable Energy.**



*Geothermal Project Site. Photo credit: Nixon George/Quick Links Production via DGDC website.*

This committee is set up in accordance with the Geothermal Resources Development Act of 2016, to review proposed concessions and other relevant matters related to the planning and use of Dominica's geothermal resources.

The inaugural meeting of the Committee took place on August 25th, 2023.

The IRC's representatives on the committee are its Executive Director, Justinn Kase and Projects Officer, Jason Timothy. As part of its representation on the Committee, the IRC will collaborate with the Dominica Geothermal Development Company (DGDC) Ltd. on reviewing and providing regulatory guidance on a 10MW geothermal plant, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project and a planned 33 and 69 kilovolt transmission lines associated with the proposed plant.

The Commission will also review and provide feedback on the Concession Agreement and Power Purchase Agreement for the plant, after negotiations are completed between DOMLEC and the Geothermal Power Company of Dominica (2023) Ltd.



# GGGI ASSISTS IRC WITH REVIEW OF DISTRIBUTED RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INTERCONNECTION POLICY

**The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) is assisting the Commission with the review of DOMLEC's Distributed Renewable Energy Generation (DREG) Interconnection Policy.**

IRC saw the need for an update to keep up with changes to the electricity market, since the first issue of the interconnection policy in **2010**. A revision will accurately reflect the requirements, standards and conditions that must be met for DREG connection to the national electricity grid.

**The targeted completion date of the review is the second quarter of 2024.**

Other related interventions that the GGGI is assisting the Commission with are:

1. The introduction of a new framework for the deployment of DREGs; and
2. A customer friendly DREG handbook that will have all relevant information associated with the standards, procedures, and best practices to advising and guiding customers, prior to their decision to procure such a system for their use.

These activities form part of a work plan between GGGI and IRC to facilitate the integration of renewable energy in the power generation mix in Dominica.



*Head of Energy Dept. at Seureca Vincent Jalbert is part of the consulting team.*

## SEURECA CONSULTANCY DEVELOPS DOMLEC'S KPIS AND GRID CODE

Consultants from Seureca/Veolia were further engaged by the AFD, upon request by the Commission, for assistance in developing and finalizing a Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Framework for DOMLEC, and a complete review of its Transmission, Distribution and Supply Grid Codes.

The KPIs developed for DOMLEC are designed to improve DOMLEC's efficiency in salient areas of its operations.

Efficiency measures are meant for DOMLEC to save costs, while achieving the company's efficiency targets set in the relevant KPIs. These savings will impact on its operations and therefore contribute to a reduction in customers' bills.

The KPIs are expected to be applied during the period of the upcoming new tariff, once DOMLEC and IRC agree on the recommendations.

The IRC will assess DOMLEC's ability to implement and adhere to the KPIs. However, there will not be any penalties for non-performance during the period of initiation. The KPIs will be tailored to fit DOMLEC's ability to report for specific circumstances, based on the consultants' findings.

As for the Grid Codes, a review was necessitated as the previous editions were incoherent and self-contradictory, introducing errors that could not be resolved from the existing documents. New transmission codes are being proposed for 33 and 69 KV lines that were absent from the previous versions of the technical document. This update is in anticipation of the construction of a transmission network/system, to accommodate a proposed 10 MW-geothermal plant in Laudat.

The Seureca team includes Vincent Jalbert, Thomas Salvatore and Ewen Le Gac—Fustemberg.

# AFD/EU MISSION DISCUSS PROGRESS ON GEOTHERMAL PROJECT WITH IRC

**Officials from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the European Union (EU) met with the IRC's Executive Director, Mr. Justinn Kase, during an observatory mission of Dominica's Geothermal Project.**



*Task Team Leader in the Energy Department of AFD based in France, Ms. Julia de Pierrepont speaks to Executive Director Kase, while officials from the EU look on.*

The visit held in March 2023 enabled the foreign delegation to observe the progress at the geothermal site in Laudat and hold discussions with stakeholders of the project. Task Team Leader in the Energy Department of AFD based in France, Julia de Pierrepont and Adviser of the Regional Director of AFD based in Martinique Clara Dufresne were part of the delegation.

Additionally, they met with representatives from Dominica Geothermal Development Company, DOMLEC and Mrs. Barbara Dailey, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy .

**Both the AFD and the EU have provided financial and technical support to develop Dominica's geothermal resource and facilitate plans for a geothermal power plant in the Roseau Valley.**

The total amount of the funding was 8.5 Million Euros (MEUR):

- 2 MEUR is financed by a Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF) Grant delegated to AFD for disbursement to the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica (GoCD). According to the AFD, the EU-CIF Grant is aimed at funding the provision of specific, highly skilled, and independent expertise in support of the GoCD. This grant is still ongoing.
- 6.5 MEUR by the AFD through a loan to the GoCD. The AFD Credit Facility is aimed at financing the drilling of two wells - for production, and reinjection. The work financed under the AFD loan was completed during the first quarter of 2015.



*Delegation from AFD and EU pictured with Mr. Kase and Timothy.*

# ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMITTEE

By Francis Paul

The Electricity Supply Act, 2006 (No. 10 of 2006) empowers the Independent Regulatory Commission to not only set rates and license entities engaged in the supply, transmission, and distribution of electricity, but also to develop standards for the sector.

**The Act also places a responsibility on the Commission to ensure the safety and preservation of life and property of consumers, as well as the public, and that such risks of electric shocks and fire are eliminated or minimized.**



**Francis Paul**

In ensuring that this function is fully carried out, the National Electro-Technical Committee (N.E.C) is charged with the task of developing, adapting, and adopting standards in the electricity sector aimed at achieving the goals stated.

These technical standards are formal documents that establish uniform engineering or technical criteria, methods, processes and practices developed through an accredited consensus process. The establishment of such standards can result in a level of safety, reliability, productivity and efficiency through uniformity and interoperability.

*One of the first of the standards that the N.E.C worked on was the Code of Practice for Electrical Wiring and Equipment, which was adapted and adopted as it was felt that it was imperative that standards are established for safe installation of electrical wiring and equipment. These standards help to ensure that electrical products and services meet the minimum requirements for safety and quality and that all electrical products used must be suited for their intended uses.*

# ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMITTEE

By Francis Paul

In addition to establishing standards to guide and develop the Electricity Industry, the committee has provided an avenue for the development of capacity in this area. Dominica being an affiliate member of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) has been afforded access of up to 200 free International Standards for adoption at the national level by the NEC. The IEC has made available training and mentorship programmes to members of the NEC, to enhance their respective skills in standardization and conformity assessment.

The members of the Committee are provided with access to various technical working groups, thus allowing for the transfer of knowledge from international experts to nationals in this sector.

During 2023, the NEC approved the following standards for adoption:

- IEC 61140 Protection Against Electric Shock – Common Aspects for Installation and Equipment, IEC 61008-1 Residual Current Operated Circuit-Breakers Without Integral Overcurrent Protection for Household and Similar Uses (RCCBS) – Part 1: General Rules.
- IEC 61009 Residual Current Operated Circuit-Breakers with Integral Overcurrent Protection for Household and Similar Uses (RCBOS) – Part 1: General Rules.

In the case of IEC 61009, it is out for comments to the public, as part of the consultative process in standards development and adoption.

Currently the standard to be reviewed is ANSI C12.1-22: Electric Meters - Code for Electricity Metering. Following the review and approval of this standard, the Committee will be continuing its work on a revised workplan for 2024

# LICENSES ISSUED IN 2023

The IRC is empowered to license all industry participants. Prospective customers who want to generate their own electricity exceeding 20kW require a license to do so.

In 2023, the statistics confirmed the following:

- Five (5) licenses were issued to commercial customers to generate solar power, including Dominica Infirmary, DOWASCO (Bay Town office), and Morne Prosper and Paix Bouche Primary Schools.
- One (1) residential customer was granted permission to generate solar power and
- One (1) commercial customer received a license to operate a diesel generator.

## FORMAL COMPLAINTS ADDRESSED FOR 2023:

| REASON                                                      | CUSTOMER CATEGORY         | NUMBER of COMPLAINTS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Damage to solar system inverters due to power surge         | Residential               | 1                    |
| High cost for relocation of HV lines & pole                 | Residential               | 1                    |
| Damage to lighting fixtures due to unscheduled power outage | Residential               | 1                    |
| Damage to appliances due to power outage & power surges     | Residential               | 1                    |
| Trespassing on property to access electrical pole.          | Residential               | 1                    |
| Damage to appliances due to power outage and power surges   | Residential               | 1                    |
| Relocation of distribution line obstructing property        | Commercial<br>Residential | 1<br>1               |

# GUARANTEED STANDARDS FOR ELECTRICITY

| Standard | Short Description                                                                                                   | Guarantee                                                                                    | Claim Mode |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| GS01     | New connection of supply (Simple)                                                                                   | Must complete within five (5) working days                                                   | Automatic  |
| GS02     | Change of meter to “Pay – as – you – go” service                                                                    | Must complete within seven (7) working days                                                  | Automatic  |
| GS03     | New Connection to Supply – Complex                                                                                  | Must make a commitment in writing, (and keep the commitment), as to completion of the works. | Claim      |
| GS04     | Billing punctuality. Time for first bill to be mailed after service connection                                      | 45 days                                                                                      | Claim      |
| GS05     | Estimated Bills                                                                                                     | Customer must not receive 2 consecutive estimated bills.                                     | Claim      |
| GS06     | Responding to billing and payment queries                                                                           | Substantive reply within 15 working days                                                     | Automatic  |
| GS07     | Reconnection of service after settling of overdue amounts or agreement on payment schedule                          | Within 24 hours                                                                              | Automatic  |
| GS08     | Investigation of voltage complaints                                                                                 | Respond and commit to solution within 15 working days of receipt                             | Automatic  |
| GS09     | Response to emergency calls (blown fuse, burnt service connections and similar single customer/limited area events) | Must respond and correct problem within 4 hours                                              | Claim      |
| GS10     | Payments due under guaranteed standards                                                                             | Within 45 days of receipt of claim OR 45 days after breach for automatic payments            | Automatic  |

# BREACHES OF GUARANTEED STANDARDS FOR 2023

The Commission reviewed DOMLEC's 2023 quarterly reports for the Quality of Service Standards for Electricity Supply quarterly reports for twelve months ended December 2023.

DOMLEC attained a success rate with an average of 99.10% for on time Guaranteed Standards, 100% for on time Overall Standards and 75% for breaches identified related to Guaranteed Standards.

| JANUARY-MARCH 2023                                                          |                        | APRIL-JUNE 2023                                                              |                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Guaranteed Standards                                                        | Average Compliance (%) | Guaranteed Standards                                                         | Average Compliance (%) |
| GS01                                                                        | 100%                   | GS01                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS02                                                                        | 100%                   | GS02                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS03                                                                        | 100%                   | GS03                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS04                                                                        | 100%                   | GS04                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS05                                                                        | 100%                   | GS05                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS06                                                                        | 100%                   | GS06                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS07                                                                        | 100%                   | GS07                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS08                                                                        | 100%                   | GS08                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS09                                                                        | 100%                   | GS09                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS10                                                                        | 100%                   | GS10                                                                         | 100%                   |
| Total success rate                                                          | 97.8%                  | Total success rate                                                           | 100%                   |
| No. of Breaches: 2. A total of \$12 was paid out in Q1 for breach of GS07.  |                        | No. of Breaches: 0                                                           |                        |
| JULY-SEPTEMBER 2023                                                         |                        | OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2023                                                        |                        |
| Guaranteed Standards                                                        | Average Compliance (%) | Guaranteed Standards                                                         | Average Compliance (%) |
| GS01                                                                        | 100%                   | GS01                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS02                                                                        | 100%                   | GS02                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS03                                                                        | 100%                   | GS03                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS04                                                                        | 100%                   | GS04                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS05                                                                        | 100%                   | GS05                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS06                                                                        | 100%                   | GS06                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS07                                                                        | 100%                   | GS07                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS08                                                                        | 100%                   | GS08                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS09                                                                        | 100%                   | GS09                                                                         | 100%                   |
| GS10                                                                        | 100%                   | GS10                                                                         | 100%                   |
| Total success rate                                                          | 99.5%                  | Total success rate                                                           | 100%                   |
| No. of Breaches: 3. A total of \$57 was paid out in Q4 for 5 breaches of GS |                        | No. of Breaches: 5. A total of \$60 was paid out in Q4 for breaches of GS07. |                        |



**42 Cork Street  
P.O Box 1687  
Roseau , Dominica  
Tel: 767 440 6634/440 7247  
Fax: 767 440 6635  
[www.ircdominica.org](http://www.ircdominica.org)**