

ENERGY FOCUS

March 2015

TARRIFF REVIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE

Independent
Regulatory
Commission





Consultation 1 –March 13th 2015

A rather disappointing turn out for the first consultation as IRC began the process of providing consumers of electricity in Dominica with an affordable and sustainable electricity supply. This consultation was held to discuss Notices for Rule Making (NPRM) for Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC) and Notices for Rule Making (NPRM) for DOMLEC's 5 Year Investment Plans. Executive Director of the IRC Lancelot McCaskey explained that under the law which we Operated under the IRC could not initiate tariff proceedings with DOMLEC. It was included in Condition 33 of the new Transmission Distribution and Supply Licence which came into effect in January 2014. General Manager of DOMLEC Mrs. Bertilia McKenzie said DOMLEC has deployed significant resources in support of the tariff filing process. She noted that DOMLEC is also guided by its obligations to its stakeholders which include meeting customer requirements for a safe, reliable and least cost electricity supply and maintaining investor confidence through the provision of a fair and reasonable return on investment. The open floor discussion which took place following the presentation by DOMLEC and the IRC provided consumers' concerns as well as opportunities for further discussion in some areas. Another consultation is scheduled for April 14 2015.



Lancelot McCaskey—IRC Executive Director



IRC's Technical staff



DOMLEC's Technical staff

Staff on the Field: Audit

The Regulations Department of the IRC must always ensure that information provided by DOMLEC is accurate. For this reason an audit is performed to ensure that the monthly kWh of energy generated and fuel consumption readings provided by DOMLEC are measured accurately and any variance identified between fuel meter and dip stick readings are within the industry standard tolerance limit. During the exercise IRC personnel observed, inspected and recorded the fuel meter and dip stick readings at Sugar Loaf and Fond Cole Generation sites to ascertain whether any variance identified are within the industry standard. They also inspected and recorded the kWh meter reading at all DOMLEC's power station for corrections and examined the invoices for fuel purchased for the month to determine the accuracy of fuel cost. Audits are performed annually.



Financial Analyst Connie Joseph during an Audit of DOMLEC's Gross Energy and Fuel Consumption



Regulations Manager Francis Paul and Utility Engineer Justinn Kase of the IRC were part of a delegation from Dominica to attend a 3 day meeting in Guadeloupe regarding Dominica's geothermal opportunities. At the meeting the technical aspect of the geothermal plant and the draft outline of the Power Purchase Agreement were discussed. DOMLEC was also represented at the meeting and made a number of recommendations. Present also from Dominica were Ambassador Vince Henderson and Mr. Eddie Lambert. The meeting was held with the DEAL TEAM and investors of the French Consortium.



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Regulating Electricity, Promoting Our Energy



Quality Service Standards

Are You Aware....

- That your service provider must mail your first electricity bill within forty five (45) days of providing you with a new connection or establishing a new account? If this is not done, you can file a claim and you will be entitled to a credit on your account of \$12.00 for a Domestic Connection and \$33.00 for Commercial connection.
- That your service provider must reconnect your electricity service on the next working day, once you settle overdue amounts and pay your reconnection fee or agree on a payment schedule? If at the end of the 24 hr period falls on a Sunday or Public Holiday, reconnection should be effected on the next business day. Failure to reconnect your service within the 24-hour period will result in an automatic credit to your account of \$12.00 for a domestic connection and \$33.00 if you have a Commercial connection?
- Where it relates to investigation of complaints regarding voltage, your service provider must visit the affected premises to ascertain if the problem does in fact exist, and shall notify the customer within 15 working days of the receipt of the report of its findings? Are you also aware that failure to do so on the part of your provider will result in an amount of \$12.00 automatically credited to your account if your connection is domestic and \$33.00 if it is Commercial ?.
- A customer should not receive two consecutive estimated bills. This ensures that customers are billed on the basis of actual meter readings and are not subject to a lack of confidence in estimated bills rendered by your service provider. If this happens you will be entitled to a credit on your account of \$12.00 for a Domestic Connection and \$33.00 for Commercial connection.

Consumer Advisory Committee

- Marigot Walk Through

High electricity rates!!! The cry of most of the villagers in Marigot as members of the Consumer Advisory Committee visited on March 21st, 2015. The purpose of this exercise was to hear directly from electricity consumers any concerns, questions or queries they may have. It is also an opportunity to bring into focus the Independent Regulatory Commission (IRC) and its work.

Villagers were reminded that as stipulated in the Transmission, Distribution and Supply licence given to DOMLEC by IRC in 2013, the IRC is required to review DOMLEC rates. The Tariff review process for DOMLEC has begun and the IRC will be hosting a second Consultation on April 14th 2015.

Concerns were also raised about the AMI meters as well as DOMLEC's Pay As You Go. The villagers were directed to formally complain to DOMLEC and if dissatisfied contact the IRC for further assistance

The members visited many areas in Marigot, distributed brochures on the process of filing a complaint, generator safety as well as one promoting the IRC. Villagers also received IRC tokens.

LOOK OUT DELICES. CAC is coming your way in MAY!!!!



Aikuali Joseph (CAC- Kalinago Territory) speaking to a villager in Weirs



CAC members speaking with employees at a boxing plant in Dam



Nisbertha Buffong (CAC- Marigot) speaking to a villager in Dam

Welcome

Mrs Nisbertha Buffong
Representative for Marigot



Consumer Advisory Committee

The Independent Regulatory Commission (IRC) saw it necessary to establish the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) to provide advice and feedback to the IRC on its directions, policies, and services as they affect consumers.

The Objectives of CAC are:

- to serve as a formal mechanism to exchange ideas and concerns related to electricity services as identified by CAC members and consumers in their communities.
- to assist in the education of consumers on electricity matters
- to serve as a communications vehicle to Dominica through the various communities on the work and plans of the IRC and its impact on the country and consumers.

The Committee comprises of 18 representatives across the island. The Independent Regulatory Commission seeks applicants to fill vacancies on its Consumer Advisory Committee

The following areas are in need of a representative.

- Castle Bruce, Good Hope, San Sauveur and Petite Soufriere,
- Capuchin
- Calibishie
- Pond Casse
- Pointe Michel

Visit the IRC office on 42 Cork

Street or call 440-6634/ 4407247.

A photograph of a woman and a man in an industrial setting. The woman, on the left, is wearing a white hard hat, a black and white striped blazer over a pink top, and yellow earplugs. She is holding a clipboard and a pen. The man, on the right, is wearing a black cap, yellow safety glasses, a white polo shirt, and green trousers. They are standing in front of large electrical cabinets with various meters and switches. The background shows a wooden wall and some equipment.

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