

## IRC Engages Stakeholders for 5th Anniversary



Seminar participants at Fort Young Hotel

**T**he Independent Regulatory Commission has recently celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary regulating the electricity sector in Dominica.

To mark its five years of service, several activities were held from July 30<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012. Two of the major highlights for the anniversary celebration were community-centered public awareness campaigns and a seminar for electricians and electrical contractors.

On Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July and Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August, IRC staff and members of the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) visited the communities of Mahaut, Colihaut and Castle Bruce to sensitize the public on the work currently being undertaken by the Commission.

Campaigners wore t-shirts with the IRC logo and handed out merchandise to community members. The response was quite positive, and in general, electricity consumers welcomed the opportunity to learn more about the IRC. Other communities across the island will be targeted in future outreach programmes.

The workshop for electricians held on August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Fort Young Hotel was hugely successful, with over 50 participants including students from the Dominica State College. They were introduced to best practices, guidelines and procedures for safe electrical installation, and apprised of the proposed requirements for certification and licensing.

IRC Regulations Manager, Francis Paul says a main objective of the conference is to promote health and safety standards to ensure the safety of citizens.

"Part of our mandate at the IRC is to ensure the safety of the general public. If an installation is not done properly, you may get electrical fires [which may cause] damage to life and property [and so] we want to ensure that electricians are conversant of the things that they need to do to ensure safe installation."

The IRC understands the need to involve and engage stakeholders in seminars of this kind, and so the Commission plans to host similar events in the near future.

# Consumer Advisory Committee

**S**ince its establishment, the Independent Regulatory Commission has seen the need to institute an ancillary body to provide a direct link to electricity consumers. A Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) was therefore set up in October 2011, to advise the Commission on the interests of consumers in the exercise of the Commission's responsibilities under the Electricity Supply Act.

The Consumer Advisory Committee currently consists of 15 members representing the 10 parishes across Dominica. The mission of the CAC is to make



Members of the Consumer Advisory Committee

recommendations to the Independent Regulatory Commission regarding consumer issues within the jurisdiction of the Commission and to facilitate the participation of the general public in outreach activities.

The following members have been appointed to the IRC's Consumer Advisory Committee:

**Mrs. Vanya Elo**  
Chairperson

**Mr. Glenroy Toussaint**  
Deputy Chairperson

**Mrs. Judy Lawrence-Larocque**

**Mr. Dani Burton**

**Mr. Vesta Anselm**

**Mr. Cleville Mills**

**Mrs. Julia LeBlanc**

**Mr. Keith Benjamin**

**Mr. Osborne Riviere**

**Mr. Gordon Baptiste**

**Mr. Heston Charles**

**Mr. Delroy George**

**Mrs. Euella Joseph**

**Mr. Bertrand Telemaque**

**Mr. Forbes Charles**

LaPlaine

Layou/Coulibistrie

Portsmouth/Glanvillia

Portsmouth/Picard

Colihaut/Dublanc

Canefield/Jimmit

Pont Cassé

Roseau

Roseau

Roseau

Soufriere/Scott's Head

Rosalie/Grand Fond

Vieille Case

Wesley

Marigot

The Consumer Advisory Committee meets at least four times a year and is guided by its Terms of Reference.

## Got a Generator?

### Register with the IRC

**I**n early 2010, the Independent Regulatory Commission began registering all generators used for private purposes in Dominica, large or small. This is in an effort to add to current statistics on electricity capacity and usage, as well as to assist in monitoring and improving the safety and environmental standards in the electricity sector.

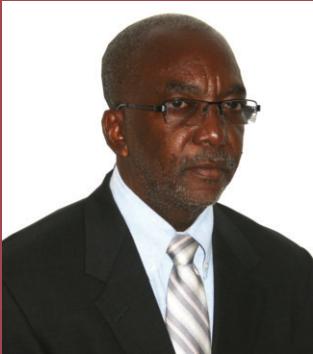
The Electricity Supply Act No. 10 of 2006 Section 31 (3) requires that owners of generators of **20kW or over** must obtain licences from the Independent Regulatory Commission. Generation sets under 20kW do not require a licence; however these units must still be registered with the IRC.

To date, approximately 104 generators have been licensed. It is an offence to generate, transmit or distribute electricity in Dominica without a licence, and if convicted, you are liable to pay a fine of \$10,000 or face one year imprisonment.

If you own a generator above 20kW, you should register your unit with the IRC, and have it certified by the government electrical division. For further information, please visit the IRC website on [www.ircdominica.org](http://www.ircdominica.org), or contact the office on 440-6634.



## Eliud T. Williams Says Goodbye as Chairman of the IRC



**A**fter two years as Chairman of the Independent Regulatory Commission, Eliud T. Williams has said goodbye. Mr. Williams has had a long and distinguished career as a public servant in Dominica, and has served on several national and regional boards including the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) and the Organization of Caribbean Utility Regulators (OOCUR).

Mr. Williams has left the IRC's Board Room to occupy the position of the President of the Commonwealth of Dominica. He was sworn in on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012, as the country's seventh President.

The Board, Management and Staff of the Independent Regulatory Commission extend warm congratulations to His Excellency Eliud T. Williams on his appointment. Best wishes for a successful and productive tenure as President!

# Guaranteed Quality of Service Standards

**I**n keeping with its objective to ensure that the highest quality of electricity is supplied to customers throughout Dominica, the Independent Regulatory Commission ordered DOMLEC to implement a 'Quality of

Service Standards' regime on December 15, 2009. This regime, inter alia, requires customers to claim compensation from DOMLEC for breaches of the standards set out below:

Standard	Short Description	Guarantee	Claim Mode
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
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

NB. It is the aggrieved customer who must initiate the claim.

### Filing a Claim

The affected customer, having recognized that there is a breach, must make a claim on the company within 60 days in a format and manner designed by the company. Compensatory payments are: (1) \$12 per breach for residential customers and (2) \$33 for commercial and industrial customers.

Since the implementation of the Quality of Service Standards regime in early 2010, breaches under these standards have been increasing; and because aggrieved consumers have not been making claims, DOMLEC has saved quite

a sizeable amount of money which should otherwise have been paid out to those affected consumers.

It is important, therefore, that consumers familiarize themselves with these standards and make claims on DOMLEC when they are breached.

As an electricity consumer, it's your responsibility to know your rights and ensure that you get the service you deserve from your provider. Play your part, familiarize yourself with the guaranteed service standards and make them work for you!

# IRC Begins Negotiating DOMLEC's Licence

**O**n June 22, 2012 DOMLEC indicated to the IRC that it is willing to begin renegotiating its licence to generate, transmit, distribute and supply electricity in Dominica. This occurred more than two years after the Commission first invited the company to begin the process, and only after the IRC promulgated a special regulation to bring it to the table. DOMLEC's current licence expires on December 31, 2015.

The Commission has since publicized DOMLEC's intention to renegotiate, for comment, over a period of 60 days. No comment was received. As a result, the IRC has now moved on to the next stage of the process, indicating to DOMLEC, a timetable for negotiation, and has begun negotiating in September, 2012. This is supposed to continue until the end of December 2012 when a round of public consultations will begin.

The timetable for negotiations is as follows:

<b>Target dates and activity</b> (Before the end of the term)	<b>Target objective</b>
<b>Month 42</b> June 2012 – completed	Licencee to advise the Commission, in writing, as to its intention to renegotiate the licence or surrender it. This will be acknowledged by the Commission within 7 working days of receipt.
<b>Month 39</b> IRC to issue Framework and Draft of proposed licence by September 7, 2012 DOMLEC to respond by October 5, 2012	If Licencee demonstrates its intention to renegotiate the licence, the Commission has to respond to the Licensee providing broad Framework and Draft of proposed new licence and setting out a proposed time table for meeting the objective contained herein.
<b>Months 39–36</b> Conduct negotiations face to face and otherwise as determined by the meetings. October 8–November 30, 2012 Complete agreed Draft by Dec 30, 2012	Preliminary negotiation of new licence terms
<b>Months 36–33</b> Consultation period January 1 to March 31, 2013 Issue Consultative Document – January 14, 2013 Consultation close – February 28, 2013 Issue Statement of Results March 29, 2013	Public and stakeholder consultation on proposed new licence
<b>Months 33–30</b> April 1–June 30, 2013 Considering issues which arose from consultations	Final round of negotiations – prepare final documents
<b>Months 29–27</b> Complete legal review and finalize licences July 1–September 30 2013 Issue licence–October 1, 2013	Commission issues new licence