



# Press Release

For immediate release

December 12, 2016

Today the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority, (URCA) published an Initial Decision and Preliminary Determination on the Bahamas Power & Light's (BPL) Small-Scale Renewable Generation Plan.

This document sets out URCA's proposed revision of BPL's Small-Scale Renewable Generation Plan for residents and businesses interested in the sale, installation and use of solar panels for the generation of electricity.

The objective of the document is to:

- highlight the key elements of BPL's Small-Scale Renewable Generation Plan;
- discuss URCA's review and proposed changes to the Plan; and
- invite comments from BPL and other stakeholders on URCA's review and proposed changes.

While it continues its full consideration of a detailed framework for the introduction of renewable energy into the generation mix in The Bahamas, in this document URCA is accelerating the approval of small-scale, grid-tied, renewable energy generation on BPL's grid, so that:

- Residents and businesses within BPL's service areas that have already installed solar panels and storage equipment can have certainty regarding the legality of and, required inspections and required approvals for their existing activities, and clarity over the potential for future impacts on their investments.
- Suppliers of solar generation equipment, as well as consumers considering installing such equipment on their properties, can take advantage of changes in the existing legal framework.
- All consumers in BPL's service area have the opportunity to provide efficient small-scale renewable energy to the grid.

URCA has set out its proposals in this document for comments by BPL and interested persons. URCA has, provisionally, given its permission to BPL to implement the first Phase of the programme forthwith, while consultation on the remainder of BPL and URCA's proposals are ongoing. Any adjustments to be made based on comments received during the consultation can be implemented while Phase 1 is on-going or for future Phases of the programme.

It should be noted that BPL is required to prepare and submit a revised version of the Small-Scale Renewable Generation Plan which will be published by URCA during January 2017, and which will also be part of this consultation process.

URCA invites and welcomes comments from licensees, members of the public and interested parties on the matters set out in this Preliminary Determination. Such comments must be received by URCA by 5:00 p.m. on 31 March 2017.

Such written submissions and comments should be submitted to URCA either:

- (i) by hand to: the Acting Chief Executive Officer, Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority, Frederick House, Frederick Street, Nassau, Bahamas; or
- (ii) by email to: [info@urcabahamas.bs](mailto:info@urcabahamas.bs); or
- (iii) by mail to: P.O. Box N-4860, Nassau, Bahamas or
- (iv) by facsimile to: (242) 393-0237.

After the period for representations closes, URCA will carefully consider such representations made and shall publish its final determination.

The incorporation of renewable energy sources in the electricity generation mix in The Bahamas is a key objective of the government's National Energy Policy 2013 – 2033 (NEP) and the Electricity Sector Policy (ESP). The main goal of both the NEP and the ESP is the supply of safe, least-cost, reliable and environmentally sustainable electricity throughout The Bahamas.

URCA is the regulator for the Electricity Sector (ES) in The Bahamas following the passage of the Electricity Act 2015 (EA) on 31 December 2015, and its coming into force on 28 January 2016. URCA has regulatory remit for all persons who generate, transmit, distribute or supply electricity within, into, from or through The Bahamas. The primary role of URCA is the regulation of the ES in accordance with the goals, policy objectives and principles underpinning the NEP and ESP.

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