

SSRG Overview:

Under the Electricity Act and Regulations amendments made in 2015, the option was made available for customers to have Grid Tied Renewable Energy (RE) systems. However, these modifications also require that systems be subject to an application, inspection and approval process. This approach has been established to ensure, amongst other factors, public safety for both the customer and the general public. Therefore, all systems existing and planned must obtain approval in accordance with this process. **Operating a grid-tied system without following the registration, application and inspection process required, can result in fines, disconnection from the grid or both.**

Additionally, as all electrical wiring installations are required to be inspected and approved by the Ministry of Works Electrical Inspection Section and all Off Grid Systems must also go through a similar application, inspection and approval process.

Residential Program Stages

Starting March 2017, those persons will be invited to apply for inclusion in the SSRG program.

Prerequisites are

- Completion of the SSRG application form
- BPL account in good standing
- An electrical schematic showing the configuration of the system.
- Signed Interconnection Agreement.
- A copy of the owner's manual for the inverter installed with the system
- Proof of payment of the associated application fee.

Commercial and Government and off Grid Residential Installations

Commercial and Non-Grid Tied Residential customers should apply to URCA in accordance with URCA's application process for SSRG systems, which will be available from URCA's website at www.urbahamas.bs from 8 May 2017.

Interconnection Agreement

All grid-tied customers will be required to sign a grid interconnection agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the arrangement. Additionally, all approved systems will be issued an SSRG Certificate indicating that the system has obtained all the required approvals.

For more information, please see our frequently asked questions below.

Additionally, the Electricity Act and Regulation changes, Requirements for grid interconnection and a sample of the Interconnection Agreement are available at www.bplco.com.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

What is the SSRG Program?

The Small Scale Renewable Generation (SSRG) Program is a program now becoming available due to recent changes to the Electricity Act and Regulations. These changes now establish a process through which BPL customers can apply for and obtain approval for compliant Non-Grid Tied and Grid Tied renewable energy systems.

Who Qualifies for the program?

The current pilot program is available to BPL residential and small commercial customers within in BPL service area. Persons outside BPL's service area (Excluding Grand Bahama) should also apply through the program to have their systems registered.

How much power can I send back to the grid?

The Requirements for Grid interconnection outline the peak connected power limits for the various islands. This information is simplified in the table below. It is important to understand that there are other limiting factors and conditions indicated in the requirements.

	Residential Maximum System Size	Commercial Maximum System Size	No system may exceed this size regardless of ACD
New Providence & Paradise Island	5kW + ACD	50kW + ACD	100kW
Abaco, Eleuthera and Exuma	3kW + ACD	25kW + ACD	50 kW
Long Island, Bimini, San Salvador, [North/Central/South] Andros, Inagua, Cat Island, Great Harbour Cay, Black Point and Staniel Cay (Exuma)	2kW + ACD	15kW+ACD	30kW
All other Family Islands	1kW + ACD	5kW+ACD	10kW

Note * Commercial and Non-Grid Tied customers must apply to URCA

How do I determine my average customer demand (ACD)?

To do this add up your kWh consumption for the past 12 months and divide the number you get by 8760. This will give you your average peak value in kilowatts (kW). You can then use the table above to determine the system size you will be allowed.

What size system do I need?

The size of the system needed will vary from customer to customer. The requirements limit the maximum system size. Therefore, total inverter output capacity should not exceed this limit. It is recommended that you seek the advice of your renewable energy system installation professional to determine the optimal size for your situation.

Will BPL pay me for what I send to the grid?

BPL will credit your account for the value of the amount of kWh (units) you send to the grid at the prevailing Fuel Charge Rate for the month in which you are billed. This is subject to change as URCA will be reviewing this matter.

Is there a list of approved installers?

Currently, there is not a list of approved installers. Therefore, customers are advised to do their due diligence, get references from their friends, relatives, and other customers before selecting your installer. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the installer you choose has all the required inspections completed (and passed) on your system to ensure you can receive your SSRG certificate at the end of the process.

Is there a listing of approved systems?

Currently, there is not a list of approved systems. However, the Requirements for Grid Interconnection document indicates technical specification that must be met by any installation in order for it to be approved. Systems that do not meet these specifications will not be allowed to connect to the grid. Any non-compliant systems not corrected will be subject to disconnection from the grid.

Systems not connected in parallel with the grid (Non-Grid Tied) are not required to meet all of these specifications. However, it is recommended that they do in the event the decision is made to upgrade then to a Grid Tied arrangement in the future, so as to minimize future costs.

Can I install my own system?

Yes, you can install your own system however the Electrical Permit Application submitted must be signed by a locally licensed electrician who by signing is indicating he is taking responsibility for the electrical installation. All other required permitting, and approvals will have to be met, and inspections passed before the installation will receive an SSRG Certificate. This applies to both Non-Grid Tied and Grid Tied Systems.

Can systems be installed on rental properties?

Systems can be installed on rental properties. It is the responsibility of the system owner to get the necessary permission of the property owner and the electricity account holder with which the SSRG System will be associated. The SSRG Certificate will be issued to the account holder as this is the individual that will be required to sign the Renewable Energy Interconnection Agreement.

Will my system provide backup power in the event of a power outage?

Typically standard grid tied systems do not provide power in the event grid supply is lost. To provide emergency supply a more sophisticated inverter along with battery storage will be required. You should discuss this option with your potential system supplier to get an understanding of pros and cons of the alternative approaches.

Can I apply my credit for energy sent to the grid to a different account?

No. Energy credits will only be applied to the account associated with the meter through which the system delivers the energy to the grid.

What if I do not submit an application for my system?

The Electricity Act and Regulations require that application MUST be made for all systems (both Off Grid and Grid Tied). This is to ensure that systems are safe from both a public and utility perspective by being required to meet the required installation standards. Failure to apply exposes the user to penalties outlined in the various regulations and guidelines.

Why do I have to apply for an off grid system?

Application is needed to ensure Non-Grid Tied systems meet the required electrical standards and to allow information on all system types to be collected. This application should be made to URCA.

Can I convert from Off Grid to Grid Tied and vice versa?

Yes, conversion is possible. An SSRG System Modification Application must be submitted if the system was previously issued an SSRG Certificate. The depending on the nature of the modification, an inspection process for the system may be required. It should be noted that whenever the make or model of the installed inverter is changed an SSRG System Modification application must be submitted.

Will I have to sign any special agreement?

All Grid Tied system customers will be required to sign a Renewable Energy Interconnection Agreement (REIA) which outlines the terms and conditions of the arrangement.

Any additional questions can be sent to SSRG_Info@bplco.com