

T&TEC moves ahead with Renewables

The Trinidad and Tobago Government has stated its commitment to the protection of the environment and to the promotion of renewable resources to increase energy security and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Ten percent of electricity generation from Renewable Energy (RE) resources has been identified as the 2021 target. According to the Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, the Honourable Nicole Olivier, this equates to approximately 177 megawatts of generation capacity. The Minister made this disclosure at the Energy Chamber's Annual Energy Development Conference at the Hyatt Regency in Port of Spain on January 18.

T&TEC's Assistant General Manager – Engineering Courtenay Mark attended the conference and was one of a four-member panel that led discussions on the topic “To what extent is 10% achievable”. Mr. Mark told the energy sector audience that “T&TEC's support is realizable...

we do not foresee any technical challenges with interconnectivity from having 10% of energy from RE sources onto the grid. However, he pointed out that “any challenges would be related to changes in legislation to allow interconnectivity and, more importantly to the regulatory mechanism that would allow T&TEC to cover revenue displaced from renewables.”

To address these matters, the Government is working on establishing a legislative framework for the generation of electricity from renewable energy sources that would involve the review and amendment of the T&TEC Act as well as the introduction of a ‘Feed-In-Tariff’ (FIT) policy, which will involve both the Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) and T&TEC for successful implementation.

According to the AGM – Engineering, the Ministry of Public Utilities expects that significant strides will be made before year end, when

Amendments to the Act to allow for the generation of electricity from renewable sources will be laid in Parliament. This as T&TEC continues to pursue the second and final phase of data collection from its wind measurement stations in Tobago. Already, data collected from the two locations at Ministers Bay and Flag Staff Hill, overlooking Charlotteville, have recorded “optimistic readings”. The data collection project was started last year and is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2016. The findings are being collected by T&TEC's System Planning and Research (SPR) engineers. Shawnette Harris-Reid, Senior Engineer from the SPR Department, explained that the data will provide a realistic assessment of the available wind energy which will guide the possible installation of a wind farm in Tobago and the specifications of infrastructure. The conversion of wind energy to electricity on a large scale is accomplished through the use of wind farms, a group of wind turbines producing electricity.

