



Press Release

Reconstructing the energy sector post Maria

The United Workers Party believes the pace of restoration of electricity post Hurricane Maria can be significantly accelerated through an intervention by government that establishes a public/private partnership designed to secure the funding, technology and manpower requirements for climate resilient reconstruction of the energy sector.

The September 2017 category five storm forced a shutdown of electricity services island-wide with widespread damage to building structures; generation units; and hydro-mechanical, electro-mechanical and control equipment that left the transmission and distribution network with restoration needs estimated at EC\$90 million dollars.

More than 4 months later, 85% of the consumers across the country are without electricity, consequently, the economy continues to suffer from the inadequate availability of energy to spur strong, national revitalization of income earning and employment generating business activity.

In the circumstances, the DLP administration appears to be leaving it up to the private corporation DOMLEC to determine how and when its resources will allow for a complete restoration of electricity services. This approach is ill-advised.

The devastating impact of Hurricane Maria on our vital energy sector has given us yet another opportunity to move it away from dependence on fossil fuels and thereby reduce our carbon foot print in line with Dominica's 2012 Low Carbon Climate Resilient Strategy. We therefore recommend the following:

1. *A strategic plan for climate resilient rebuilding of Dominica's energy sector that divides the country into specific zones and sets out a distribution/ generation approach for renewable energy utilization in each zone*
2. *A partnership between DOMLEC and the state through which government will source the grant funding and soft loan financing required for:
1) complete restoration of electricity services within six months; and
2) 100% of Dominica's electricity requirements to be generated from renewable energy sources by 2023*



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3. *Immediate commencement of a specialized one-month training program utilizing funding from the National Employment Program (NEP) and technical assistance from DOMLEC and CARILEC to provide at least 200 lines men to meet the manpower needs of restoring and maintaining transmission lines around the country.*

4. *Immediate commencement of a specialized training program utilizing funding from the National Employment Program and technical assistance from renewable energy experts to provide at least 200 technicians skilled in the basics of setting up hydro, solar and wind energy systems.*

The UWP strongly urges the DLP administration to adopt these policy measures in the public interest for full, effective, climate resilient restoration of electricity services without further delay.

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