

Renewables figures show huge growth – or do they?

The latest registration data from Ofgem shows that over 84 MW of renewable capacity was registered under the feed-in tariff scheme in the month of September. This represents a 36% increase in the cumulative installed capacity in just one month.

Analysis of the data by Feed-In Tariffs Ltd, however, shows that the monthly figures can be misleading. About 40% of the September figure relates to tariff codes that were phased out in July. These installations are therefore being registered at least two months late. It is expected that there may be more large-scale solar projects, which beat the guillotine for the fast track review but still aren't registered, so this figure is likely to rise further.

The detailed analysis by the company indicates that the figures on the central FITs register persistently lag the rate at which installations are commissioned. About one quarter of the systems installed in the first year (to 31st March 2011) were registered after the end of the year. And a staggering 90% of installations within tariff bands phased out by the fast track review were registered after 1 August, when this review took effect.

"It is not surprising that the government was so vague about the evidence base for the fast track review", says company director Philip Wolfe. "The hard data on the feed in tariff installations obviously takes some months to materialise".

An analysis on the company's website indicates that the average lead time for registering installations is about three months, and the maximum can be much longer than that. Philip Wolfe, who is a leading advocate of the tariffs from his time as Director General of the Renewable Energy Association, says that this delay is not surprising. "There are so many parties involved in the process: the system owner, the installer, the FITs licensee and the energy regulator Ofgem all have to do their bit. This can take months", he adds ruefully; "my own system at home should have been registered on day one of the feed in tariffs back in April 2010 and I still haven't seen a penny in feed in tariffs!"

Notes for editors:

The Feed-In tariffs Ltd website is an information source on the feed-in tariff scheme:

www.FITariffs.co.uk

Its analysis of the latest figures is shown here:

<http://www.fitariffs.co.uk/statistics/monthly/timing/>

Ofgem's latest newsletter on the feed-in tariffs is available from here:

<http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/Sustainability/Environment/fits/Newsletter/Pages/Newsletter.aspx>

Attached picture:

The solar park at Westcott was commissioned and applied for accreditation in June, it was registered in October. The extension made in September has been notified but is yet to be registered.

For more information:

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