Organization of Caribbean Utility Regulators

NEWSLETTER

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Regulatory Resilience: Navigating the 2026 Caribbean Utility Landscape

Welcome to the third edition of our quarterly newsletter. In this issue, we highlight the distinct accomplishments and challenges shaping our member nations. A central theme across many country updates is the ongoing strain of high electricity prices, driven largely by global conflicts.

While these economic pressures present a shared burden, they also serve as a reminder of why we cannot allow external shocks to stall our progress. We must remain steadfast in forging our own energy future. Even as we manage these immediate financial realities, we must continue to confront the escalating impacts of global warming, particularly the prolonged dry spells threatening water and energy security across the Caribbean.

By strengthening our regulatory frameworks today, we can build the resilient, sustainable infrastructure our region needs for tomorrow.

Twenty-First OOCUR Annual Conference

The 21st OOCUR Annual Conference is now scheduled to take place from **May 10-13, 2027**, in the beautiful Island of Curacao and not the British Virgin Islands as previously indicated.

The theme for the 2027 Conference is: "**Regulating Ahead: Capacity, Speed and Credibility in Caribbean Utility Regulation**".

Stay tuned for registration details, speaker announcements, and agenda updates.

OOCUR 21st ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Willemstad • Curaçao

FEATURED ARTICLE

Wired by the Caribbean: The Islanders Behind Our Power, Signals and Water

Dr. Marsha Atherley-Ikechi, Executive Director, Organisation of Caribbean Utility Regulators



OOCUR Executive Director, Dr. Marsha Atherley-Ikechi

In 1849, inside a Havana theatre, an engineer was working on a way to carry the human voice along a wire. More than a century later in Barbados, a chemistry professor was building solar water heaters, and that work helped make the island one of the world's leaders in solar water heating. Neither story is well known in the region. Yet both belong to a long line of Caribbean contributions to the

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services we now take for granted: electricity, telecommunications, and safe water.

This article traces some of those contributions. It covers Caribbean-born scientists who hold patents in optical and battery technology, practical builders who turned sunlight into hot water and drinking water, and engineers who wired our first grids. Some are celebrated abroad and barely known at home. The record is thinnest for water and wastewater, which says as much about what we have failed to document as about what was never done.

For a region that imports most of its technology, these stories are a useful reminder. The Caribbean has done more than adopt the utility services of the modern world; it has helped invent them.

Signals: the region's place in telecommunications

The telephone story begins in Cuba. Antonio Meucci, an Italian engineer, spent about fifteen years in Havana from 1835 as chief engineer of the Gran Teatro Tacón. While there he moved from experiments in electromedicine to his first telephone system, which he conceived in 1849. That was decades before Alexander Graham Bell's patent. In 2002 the United States House of Representatives passed Resolution 269 recognising Meucci's work on the invention of the telephone (Telefónica n.d.). Meucci was not Caribbean born, but his first telephone was conceived in a Caribbean city.

Trinidad has a similar footnote. John Logie Baird, the Scottish pioneer of television, arrived in Trinidad in November 1919 to recover his health. Accounts place some of his early experiments on a cocoa estate in Santa Cruz before he returned to Britain around late 1920 (Newsday 2019). The link is thinly documented and is best told as local history rather than settled fact.

The region's own sons carried the story further. Gerard A. Alphonse, a Haitian American engineer at RCA Labs (later the Sarnoff Institute), built what was then the world's highest performance superluminescent diode in 1986. That light source is used in tunable lasers for telecommunications, in fibre optic gyroscopes and in medical imaging. He holds more than 50 United States patents, served as 2005 president of the IEEE's United States division and is in the New Jersey Inventors Hall of Fame (Wikipedia 2026a).

Barbadian-born Cardinal Warde, a professor of electrical engineering at MIT, holds at least ten patents and co-invented microchannel and charge-transfer plate spatial light modulators. His work includes optical communication through the atmosphere designed to perform in poor weather. He founded Optron Systems in 1982 and Radiant Images in 1999, the latter making microdisplays used in telecommunications devices (Lemelson-MIT n.d.).

Closer to home, Jamaica's Hedley Jones (1917 to 2017) was a wartime radar engineer who built high-fidelity amplifiers in the late 1940s that changed public address technology. He also built one of the first solid-body electric guitars in 1940 and co-designed Jamaica's first traffic lights in 1952 (Wikipedia 2026b). He shows how much Caribbean electronics talent worked outside formal laboratories.

Power: from tramlines to sunlight

The region's electricity story starts with engineers who built systems before anyone called it innovation. Henry Arthur Campbell (1873 to 1953), born in Gordon Town, Jamaica, began as an apprentice with Jamaica Electric Light and Power in 1890. He went on to serve as Chief Engineer of Jamaica Public Service Company and helped establish and maintain Kingston's electric tram



system, working with the utility for more than sixty years (Wikipedia 2026d).

The best-known Caribbean energy pioneer is Barbados's Oliver Headley, Professor of Chemistry at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill. Headley developed solar water heaters, solar stills, solar crop dryers, photovoltaic systems, and a solar icemaker. His advocacy, backed by Prime Minister Tom Adams, helped build a local manufacturing industry. By the late 1990s about 40 per cent of Barbadian homes used locally made solar water heaters (Jones 1998). Few Caribbean innovations have had as lasting an effect on household energy bills.

William L. Hinds, also Barbadian, carried that practical tradition forward. His company developed agricultural solar dryers, including a walk-in dryer with computerised temperature controls that extended the shelf life of grain products from two months to twelve. He also worked on biogas digesters for farm waste and later became Barbados's Chief Energy Conservation Officer (Wikipedia 2026c).

One of the region's most consequential energy inventions was made far from its shores. Olga D. González-Sanabria, born in Patillas, Puerto Rico, joined NASA's Lewis Research Center in 1979. She was co-patentee on a separator technology that improved the life of nickel-hydrogen batteries, work that earned an R&D 100 Award in 1988 and helped power spacecraft (NASA n.d.). As Caribbean grids turn to battery storage, her career is a reminder that energy storage is not a foreign field to us.

Water: the thinnest record

Water is where the region needs innovation most and where its record is weakest. Oliver Headley's solar stills, which produced distilled water from sunlight, were an early answer to a problem every small island knows (Jones 1998).

The most striking recent example comes from Saint Lucia. Karlis Noel is a former fisherman from Laborie who left school early and taught himself engineering. About twenty years ago he built the Eastern Caribbean's first solar-powered mobile desalination plant. His systems have since been deployed in Nauru in the Pacific and in Tanzania, and he won funding in an international blue economy competition in Dubai, chosen from more than 1,500 applicants (St. Lucia Times 2026).

Beyond these, the trail goes cold. I could find no well-documented Caribbean inventor of wastewater treatment technology. That does not mean there were none. Engineers at our water utilities have long improvised treatment, pumping and leak repair under tight budgets, but almost none of that work was written down, patented or credited. In a region where several islands, Barbados among them, are classed as water-scarce, that silence is itself a finding.

Why this matters to regulators

These stories are not only history; they say something about how we regulate. Barbados did not become a solar water heating leader through invention alone. It got there because a scientist, a government and local manufacturers backed a home-grown technology over many years, and the rules around it let it grow.

Regulators have more influence over that kind of outcome than we sometimes admit. Tariff design, procurement rules, licensing, and standards decide whether a new idea can reach customers or stalls at the pilot stage. A feed-in tariff, a storage tariff, or a clear path for small providers to connect can be the difference between a prototype in a workshop and a service in people's homes.

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There are three practical things OOCUR members can do:

1. **Make room to test new ideas.** Time-limited trials with clear safeguards let local innovators prove a technology without putting customers at risk.
2. **Write procurement rules that local firms can meet.** Large, rigid tenders tend to favour imported solutions. Where quality allows, smaller lots and performance-based specifications open the door to regional suppliers.
3. **Record and credit what our utilities already do.** Much Caribbean innovation sits in the heads of engineers and technicians. Regulators can encourage utilities to document these improvements, especially in water and wastewater, so that they are shared across the region rather than lost.

The next Oliver Headley or Karlis Noel is probably already working somewhere in our region. Whether we hear of them may depend in part on the rules we write.

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JAMAICA

Woman in Energy Award

Shining a Light on Leadership: Dr. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson Honoured with Woman in Energy Award

The High Commission of Canada in Jamaica recently celebrated Dr. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson, Director of Consumer and Public Affairs at the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), as a recipient of the prestigious Woman in Energy Award. Conceived by the Canadian Government, this initiative recognizes and celebrates the extraordinary achievements of women making significant contributions to their country's energy sector.

Dr. Grinam-Nicholson was proudly honoured for her outstanding dedication to consumer protection, regulatory governance, and public understanding within Jamaica's utilities sector. Over more than a decade at the OUR, she has championed the consumer experience by leading national satisfaction surveys, conducting mystery-shopping research, and developing communications policies that amplify the voices of Jamaican citizens in utility governance.

Her impactful work also extends globally. As a technical volunteer and regional expert with NARUC

and USAID, Dr. Grinam-Nicholson has supported energy regulators in Nigeria, Zambia, and Bangladesh—strengthening stakeholder engagement, complaints handling, and protections for vulnerable customers.

The Executive Director and Members of OOCUR extend congratulations to Dr. Grinam-Nicholson and Jamaica.

High Commission of Canada — Haut-commissariat du Canada

July 13, 2026

Mrs. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson
Director, Consumer and Public Affairs
Office of Utilities Regulation
36 Trafalgar Road, 3rd Floor
Kingston 10
Jamaica

Dear Mrs. Grinam-Nicholson,

It is with great pleasure that we write to inform you that the High Commission of Canada in Jamaica wishes to recognize you as a recipient of our ***"Woman in Energy"*** award. This accolade, as conceived by the Government of Canada, serves to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary achievements of exceptional women who have made significant contributions to their country's energy sector.

This award reflects Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy and its commitment to human rights, gender equality and inclusion, while empowering women and girls to meaningfully contribute to, and ultimately play a leading role in, their nation's development. It also seeks to honor remarkable women who have transcended traditional boundaries, demonstrating resilience and determination in confronting and overcoming various obstacles, to excel in their respective fields.

Your expertise and dedication, as demonstrated by your significant contributions to advancing clean energy and sustainable development in Jamaica, makes you an outstanding recipient of this award. Canada deeply values your work, recognizing its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as our respective countries' shared commitment to addressing critical environmental challenges.



Photo 1: (L-R) Dr. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson; Mrs. Sheree Ebanks, Caribbean Utilities Company, Ltd. (CUC), Cayman Islands; His Excellency Mark Berman, High Commissioner of Canada to Jamaica; Winsome Callum, JPS and Ms. Melissa Newman, Jamaica Energy Partners.



Photo 2: Dr. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson, Director of Consumer and Public Affairs, Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), and Mr. Ansord Hewitt, Director-General of the OUR.



Photo 3: Dr. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson, Director of Consumer and Public Affairs, OUR and His Excellency Mark Berman, High Commissioner of Canada to Jamaica, The Bahamas and Consul General for the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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Regulators and Utilities, One Room: OOCUR's Largest Training Event Yet

From 13 to 15 July 2026, OOCUR delivered its Utility Rate-Making Workshop at the Caribbean Development Bank in Wildey, Barbados. For the first time, regulators, and the utilities they regulate worked through a full rate-making curriculum side by side.

62 participants	**17** jurisdictions	**36** agencies
186 training days	**4.15/5** overall rating	**+63** Net Promoter Score

Who came.

The workshop brought together 62 participants from 17 jurisdictions and 36 agencies, well above the planning level of about 50. Utilities outnumbered regulators, with 37 participants from utilities, 22 from regulatory authorities and three from a private developer. Electricity and water were both well represented, with 21 and 15 utility participants, respectively. Five regulators from outside OOCUR's membership, from Belize, the Cayman Islands and Grenada, also took part (OOCUR Secretariat 2026).

What was covered?

Over three days, faculty from Christensen Associates Energy Consulting, K&M Advisors and the OOCUR Secretariat led eleven taught sessions. These covered the rate case and revenue requirement, cost of service, cost of capital, electricity and water rate design, dynamic pricing, net metering and distributed generation, incentive regulation, and tariffs that protect vulnerable consumers, including the gender dimensions of tariff design. Teams worked on a group project throughout, applying each day's material to a utility dataset and presenting a rate case analysis and tariff proposal on the final afternoon. Certificates of completion were presented at the close.

What participants said

Participants rated the workshop 4.15 out of 5. Seventeen of the 27 respondents would strongly recommend it, and none would discourage others, giving a Net Promoter Score of +63. Cost of capital and rate of return was the highest-rated session, at 4.44. The most valued feature was hearing directly how counterparts handle shared problems. Participants also asked for more: 52 per cent found three days too short and none too long, and 48 per cent want to work on real Caribbean rate filings (OOCUR Secretariat 2026).

What comes next?

In response, the Secretariat has proposed an annual five-day flagship programme for the Executive Council's consideration. It would keep a joint core, add separate electricity, and water streams, and include a two-day module in which participants take a real Caribbean filing through to a draft decision. The design would also lower the cost of each training day.

Thank you. OOCUR thanks the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank for co-financing the workshop, the Caribbean Development Bank for hosting it, and Christensen Associates and K&M Advisors for their faculty. Our thanks also go to every participant who made the room work.

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Photos from the Utility Rate Making Workshop

Three Forums, One Message: The Caribbean Writes Regulatory Rules

In August and September, OOCUR's leadership and member regulators took the Organisation's voice to three international forums in Punta Cana, Miami, and Tbilisi, across telecommunications and energy. The message in each was the same: Caribbean regulators produce practical evidence others can use, and they belong where investment and policy decisions are made.

Punta Cana: future-proofing telecoms policy

CANTO's 41st Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition met from 9 to 12 August at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, Punta Cana, under the theme "Elevate the Caribbean: From Connectivity to Global Competitiveness." It drew 611 attendees from 52 countries (Tech News TT 2026). On 11 August, OOCUR Chairman Guy Malone, immediate past Chairman Ansord Hewitt and immediate past Executive Council member Kenva Williams sat on the Regulatory Roundtable, *Future-Proofing Caribbean Telecoms Policy*. They were joined by Seitu Lawrence of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, with CANTO Director Desha Clifford moderating. The panel considered how telecoms policy and regulation must evolve as operators, technologies and investment models change. Three of the four regulators on the stage came from OOCUR's leadership, past and present, a clear sign of the Organisation's standing in the sector.





Photos from CANTO

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Miami: the regulator in an investors' room

At the 10th Caribbean Infrastructure Forum (CARIF), held on 15 and 16 September, nearly 300 leaders from more than 30 countries gathered for the largest edition yet (New Energy Events 2026a). Executive Director Dr Marsha Atherley-Ikechi spoke on *The Future of the Caribbean Utility: Regulation, Investment and the Cost of Modernization*, alongside Delano R. Arthur, Commissioner of the Turks and Caicos Islands Energy and Utilities Department, and the chief executives of JPS, BPL and Pelican Energy TCI (New Energy Events 2026b). OOCUR's point was that affordability and investment are not at odds. Clear rules on cost recovery, performance and risk reconcile them, and investors read those rules before they commit capital.





Photos from CARIF

Tbilisi: A Caribbean voice on the global stage

The ninth World Forum on Energy Regulation (WFER IX) met from 21 to 24 September under the theme "When Balance Is Achieved," hosted by Georgia's GNERC under ICER (ERRA 2026). Dr Atherley-Ikechi spoke on the opening plenary, *Perspectives from Regulators*, moderated by Dr Annegret Groebel of BNetzA, and moderated *Designing Energy Systems for the Future*, which featured OOCUR Deputy Chairman Nigel Burgess (GNERC 2026a; 2026b). Two further members spoke: Donn Foggo of the Regulatory Authority of Bermuda on consumer protection, and Cheryl Lewis of Jamaica's Office of Utilities Regulation on grid investment and network tariffs (GNERC 2026a; 2026b). The forum closed with Pedro Verdelho (ERSE, Portugal) elected ICER Chair and Sandoval Feitosa (ANEEL, Brazil) Vice-Chair (ERSE 2026).

What it means for members

Across the three forums, eight OOCUR representatives filled ten speaking and moderating roles, spanning telecoms and energy and both regional and global audiences. That breadth matters. It shows partners, investors, and peer regulators that OOCUR speaks for regulators across sectors, and that its members bring tested experience to the table. The Secretariat will follow up on the connections made and keep members informed as opportunities develop.



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Photos from WFER IX

Name Her in This Room

By OOCUR Executive Director, Dr. Marsha Atherley-Ikechi

A spoken word piece on utility regulation in the Caribbean: energy, water and wastewater, telecommunications

Breathe in the salt of this room. Breathe out the certainty that you already know what these islands need.

I come before you claiming no expertise. I come as a daughter of small places, of coral and cane and rainwater caught off a galvanise roof. I come as a keeper of the ledgers nobody bothered to write down. The standpipe ledger. The lamp oil ledger. The ledger of who was served first and who was told to wait.

So listen, not only with your ears, but with the memory held in your hands. The memory of carrying water uphill. The memory of the kerosene lamp on the table while the estate house glowed.

For the story of a utility begins with the body.

Long before there were meters, before there were tariffs, before there were licences and revenue requirements, there was the spring, the rain, the wind, the sun.

And service, beloveds, was nearness. It was the well at the centre of the village. It was one fire warming more than one house. It was a drum carrying a message across three valleys. It was the sufficiency of enough.

Then came the estate.

Water was piped first to the great house and left to the women to fetch everywhere else. The first pole carried current to the counting room, not the cot. The first cable came ashore to tell London the price of sugar, never to tell a mother that her child had landed safely.

The estate aqueduct is now the transmission line. The counting room is now the head office. The overseer's book is now the disconnection notice. The mail packet is now the submarine cable. The language has changed. The direction of the flow has not. It still runs outward, upward, offshore, away from the many and into the accounts of the few.

Natural monopoly, they call it. And it is. But what is it really?

It is a promise drafted in a language the household never saw. It is an exclusivity granted before independence and honoured long after it. It is a twenty-five-year contract signed by people who will not be in the room to answer for it, pressing down on a generation who never consented to it.

And so I ask you, you who hold the pen.

What is buried beneath the revenue requirement? Whose hill loses pressure every night at ten? Whose feeder is shed first when the frequency dips? Whose water is called non-revenue, and whose is simply unpaid for by a ministry that will never be cut off? Who carries the fuel surcharge on a barrel priced in a currency they do not earn? Who is told to be resilient with a roof, no insurance, and a wastewater outfall running into the bay where their children swim?

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What of the fisherman whose consumption is too small to appear in your load forecast? What of the elder who cannot pay online, in a country where the branch has closed? What of the community whose data the market calls uneconomic to serve? What of the sacred that refuses to answer to a price signal?

Can you stand in the messiness of it? Can you hold a decision that is efficient and still wrong? Can you sit with a tariff that balances the books and unbalances a household? Can you risk not only the utility's return, but your models, your assumptions, your professional comfort, your fragile certainty?

You who are the most powerful in this room, are you truly able to share the power you hold with the people who must live inside your decisions? That sharing is not a courtesy. It is the whole of regulation.

And while you consider it, understand this. You will name me in this room.

You will name me. The household at the end of the line. The village at the end of the feeder. The island at the end of the cable.

You will name me in the licence conditions. In the quality-of-service standards. In the fine print of the integrated resource plan. In the terms of the power purchase agreement. In the wastewater permit nobody enforces. In the universal service fund that sits unspent.

For I am not a load. I am not a connection point. I am not an arrears figure written off quietly at year end. I am not a line item in a rate base, nor a footnote in an annual report, nor a vulnerable customer category to be adjusted for.

I am the reason the licence exists at all. I am the source of every dollar in every asset you will ever approve.

So name me in this room. And as you say my name, unbend from the spreadsheet. Unclench the jargon. Open the hearing wider than those who can afford counsel. Because there is no regulation without proximity. There is no legitimacy without listening. And there is no energy transition, no water security, no digital future, without her.

She. The small place. The first coast to feel the storm and the last to be compensated for it.

Name her. And may the light hold, may the water run, may the signal reach. Thank you.

A selection of Key Regulatory Events - June through September 2026

> ***This Country-specific information was aggregated and summarised through extensive online research across multiple industry sources.***

Anguilla

Utility regulatory events in Anguilla between the reporting period were defined by major regulatory overhauls in satellite telecommunications framework alongside continuous emergency government intervention to manage volatile electricity prices.

Telecommunications & Spectrum Regulation

Anguilla Public Utilities Commission (PUC) launched a comprehensive public consultation on July 6, 2026, targeting a new Satellite Spectrum and Licensing Framework (Public Notice 2026-2).

- Proposed framework covers Non-Geostationary Satellite Orbit (NGSO) broadband, Direct-to-Device services, and satellite earth stations.



- Initial consultation window closed on August 14, 2026, drawing written feedback from international tech giants including SpaceX (Starlink), Amazon Project Kuiper, AST SpaceMobile, Rivada Space Networks, Flow (Cable & Wireless Anguilla), and Digicel.
- PUC advanced to the reply-comment phase on September 8, 2026, alongside issuing Public Notice 2026-3 to detail an official Internet Service Provider (ISP) license application from Starlink Caribbean, LLC.

Electricity Tariffs & Subsidies (ANGLEC)

- Anguilla Electricity Company's (ANGLEC) fuel surcharge calculation hit a massive peak of EC$1.05 per kWh in September 2026 due to skyrocketing global oil prices and shipping issues.
- Government passed its People First Supplementary Budget #1 in June 2026, allocating EC$15.28 million in contingency funds to insulate consumers from the severe surcharge spikes.
- Millions in subsidies were disbursed between June and September, transitioning by the end of September into a targeted credit program model split between Residential & Stores, the Accommodation Sector, and Hotels & Luxury Villas.

Barbados

Barbados' utility regulation underwent major shifts primarily driven by efforts to accelerate renewable energy investments and manage grid upgrades. The Barbados Fair Trading Commission (FTC) and the Ministry of Energy navigated rising costs, energy security concerns, and structural legislative overhauls.

Regulatory Decisions & Rate Changes

- Barbados Fair Trading Commission (FTC) approved a grid stability application on August 14, 2026, allowing Barbados Light & Power Company (BLPC) to recover investments for three new 20 MVar synchronous condensers (SCOs).
- FTC granted a ruling in June 2026 allowing BLPC to extend temporary generation units through 2027 and expand capacity by 6 MW to mitigate hurricane-season outage risks.
- Temporary power expansion triggers an average customer bill increase of $1.25 per month, scheduled to take effect no sooner than September 2026.

Major Policy Shifts

- Energy Minister Kerrie Symmonds announced the activation of ministerial exemption powers under Section 37 of the Utility Regulation Act on August 25, 2026. New powers allow the Minister to exempt critical utility projects from traditional FTC oversight to bypass structural delays and unlock an estimated half a billion dollars in stalled renewable energy funding.

  The use of Section 37 sparked public controversy, with energy justice advocates and legal experts warning that bypassing the FTC could undermine independent rate regulation and corporate accountability.

25th Anniversary Open House

The Fair Trading Commission continued its 25th Anniversary Celebrations and hosted an Open House event on **Friday, July 17** at its Green Hill, St. Michael headquarters. The event featured interactions with regulated entities like BLPC, the Barbados Water Authority (BWA), and FLOW (Cable & Wireless (Barbados) Limited.)

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Bermuda

The Bermuda utility regulatory landscape for the period experienced an unprecedented overhaul**,** marked by a brand-new national electricity policy, heavy telecommunications interventions, and controversial legislative amendments allowing the government to pause long-term energy plans.

Events included:

- Electricity Amendment Act Passed (June 2026): Approved by parliament to prioritize consumer affordability and grant the Minister of Home Affairs public-interest power to pause the long-term energy planning process.
- 2026 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) Published (July 3): Officially published by the Regulatory Authority (RA) to serve as the island's blueprint for future energy mix, generation, and reliability.
- National Electricity Sector Policy 2026 Finalized (July 29): Released by the Bermuda Government to establish a technology-neutral, least-cost strategy through 2045 focused on affordability and reduced fossil fuel dependence.
- Unbundled Base Electricity Rates Implemented (August 1): Introduced a restructured, fairer billing format by the RA where fixed and variable grid costs are unbundled without altering average overall rates.
- 2026 IRP Formally Suspended (September): The Minister utilized new legislative powers to pause the IRP process for up to 18 months to ensure alignment with national energy policy.
- OneComm Broadband Price Mandate (September 17): Enforced a mandatory 15% reduction in broadband pricing to enhance affordability within the telecommunications sector.

Jamaica

- The Government of Jamaica rejected an automatic renewal of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited's (JPS) all-island electricity licence, leading to ongoing high-level negotiations led by Energy Minister Daryl Vaz ahead of the 2027 expiration deadline.
- **Telecommunications Licensing Notice (September 9, 2026)**: The Office of Utility Regulation (OUR) published a public notice regarding an application for telecommunications licences submitted by Xpresswifi Technology Limited.
- **Water and Sewerage Services Notice (August 14, 2026)**: The OUR issued a regulatory public notice concerning providers of water and sewerage services as financial pressures mounted on the National Water Commission (NWC).

St. Kitts and Nevis

- **St. Kitts Marriott Resort Roadmap Workshop: Convened on June 3–4, 2026**, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Energy and Utilities—with support from the EU EUROCLIMA Programme, UNDP, and Greening the Islands Foundation—launched a consultative workshop to build a comprehensive 100% Renewable Energy Transition Roadmap for the federation by 2030.
- **Energy Policy Mixer: Held on June 18, 2026**, industry leaders and policymakers gathered for a targeted conversation session titled "The Future of Energy Leadership in St. Kitts and Nevis: Powering Growth through..." to discuss operational and policy execution.

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- **National Assembly Energy & Infrastructure Session: Convened on September 18, 2026,** parliamentarians reviewed major energy security initiatives, including a 50-megawatt solar PV project paired with a 30.5-megawatt-hour battery energy storage system designed to supply up to 30–50% of St. Kitts' annual electricity, alongside updates on expanded groundwater and water security infrastructure.
- **EU High-Level Discussions on Nevis Geothermal: Held on September 24, 2026**, a visiting European Union delegation met with Nevis Island Administration officials to advance financial and technical support for Nevis geothermal energy development.

St. Lucia

- **St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce and LUCELEC Business Engagement:** Held on June 3, 2026, at the St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture Secretariat in Bois d'Orange, this session allowed business owners to directly discuss escalating electricity costs and the impact of rising fuel surcharges with St. Lucia Electricity Services Limited (LUCELEC) representatives.
- **NURC Water Tariff Review and Final Determination**: In June 2026, the National Utilities Regulatory Commission published its final determination on the Water and Sewerage Company Inc. (WASCO) triennial tariff review. The decision approved phased water and sewerage rate increases starting with the June 26, 2026, billing cycle, while exempting low-income households using up to 2,000 gallons (base rate frozen at EC$24.42).
- **I-TRACK Foundation Approval for LUCELEC**: On July 30, 2026, the I-TRACK Foundation Board approved Saint Lucia for International Renewable Energy Certificate (I-REC(E)) issuance following a country assessment requested by LUCELEC, enabling certified renewable electricity tracking.
- **CARICOM Regional Energy Efficiency Building Code (CREEBC) Meeting**: Saint Lucia hosted the CARICOM Regional Energy Efficiency Building Code face-to-face meeting from August 31 to September 3, 2026, at the Harbor Club Conference Room, gathering regional experts to advance sustainable building standards.
- **LUCELEC September Fuel Surcharge Adjustment**: On September 23, 2026, LUCELEC announced that the fuel surcharge cost adjustment for September 2026 rose to 35.6 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh), driven by international crude oil prices averaging roughly US$91 per barrel during August.
- **Government and Regulatory Discussions on Energy Costs**: Throughout September 2026, Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre and utility officials held consultations regarding soaring international oil prices, state fuel/VAT exemptions, and potential additional relief mechanisms for households and commercial entities.

St. Maarten

Regulatory Oversight

- Government formally operationalized the Electricity Concession Ordinance supervisory mechanism under a late May ministerial decree and the Bureau of Telecommunications and Post (BTP) St. Maarten was officially designated as the independent supervisor of utility company GEBE.

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- BTP exercised its new legal authority from June through September to audit financial data, conduct inspections, test operational assumptions, and independently verify quarterly fuel clause calculations.

Disconnection Freeze & Collections Reforms

- Consumer advocacy group ACP-SXM launched a formal petition and community march in mid-June 2026 to demand rights, accountability, and transparency.
- GEBE officially paused all scheduled household utility disconnections on June 26, 2026, due to intense legal and public pressure. The utility committed to partnering directly with ACP-SXM to design a "Temporary Collections Policy" establishing fair and transparent payment procedures for outstanding bills.

Fuel Clause & Tariff Disputes

- GEBE increased the electricity fuel clause to XCG 0.49 per kWh on July 10, 2026, citing Middle Eastern geopolitical tensions and pricing structures from supplier SOL Antilles. Government admitted during parliamentary budget debates that GEBE's fuel clause had gone 15 years without independent external verification, sparking public demands for a retroactive forensic audit of consumer charges.

Subsidies & Billing System Upgrade

- Budget debates concluded that tight national finances prohibit broad electricity subsidies or direct cash-relief provisions, focusing instead on legislative efficiency cost-reductions.
- GEBE executed a major migration to a new billing system in mid-September 2026, which drew immediate backlash from consumers. Updated, bank-transfer-style invoices were criticized by local residents for reducing transparency by obscuring precise consumption metrics in kWh and cubic meters.

Suriname

Suriname's utility and energy regulatory landscape was dominated by high-level framework updates at the Suriname Energy, Oil & Gas Summit (SEOGS), expanding regional hydrocarbon cooperation, and advancements in offshore infrastructure permitting.

- SEOGS 2026 (June 23–26, 2026): Focused on environmental considerations for exploration, workforce mobility, and strengthening institutional frameworks for offshore project execution.
- Natural Gas Sector Policy (June 2026): Advanced regulatory discussions on infrastructure planning to support the target of reaching over 600M standard cubic feet of natural gas per day by 2035.
- Suriname–Venezuela Bilateral Talks (September 11, 2026): Hosted a high-level diplomatic visit by Delcy Rodríguez Gómez to coordinate cross-border hydrocarbon utility cooperation.
- Open Acreage System Licensing (Ongoing Q3 2026): Staatsolie processed its fourth consecutive open acreage proposal under strict compliance and local content transparency guidelines.

The Bahamas

The prominent regulatory and utility milestones from this period included the following events:

June

- BPL Fined for Outages: On June 16, 2026, URCA fined Bahamas Power and Light (BPL) nearly $30,000 for failing to report major



blackouts in Abaco and Crooked Island within the mandatory 24-hour window.

- Energy Efficiency Frameworks: On June 24, 2026, URCA issued frameworks ES 10/2026 and ES 11/2026 to introduce new compliance measures for energy efficiency across the electricity sector.
- New Accounting Guidelines: Effective June 24, URCA implemented Regulatory Accounts Guidelines (ES 17/2026) forcing public suppliers to separate financial tracking to stop cost-shifting and prepare for tariff audits.
- URCA Authority Expanded: Following the withdrawal of a lawsuit by Grand Bahama Power Company, URCA officially assumed oversight of Freeport and Grand Bahama, creating a formal complaints pathway for consumers.

July & August

- $610K Customer Credit Settlement: On July 16, 2026, URCA allowed BPL to redirect a $610,240 fine for historical violations back to consumers, resulting in an automatic $8.45 credit for over 72,000 residential accounts.
- Grid Management Handover: The Bahamas Grid Company (BGC) took control of New Providence's transmission and distribution networks, launching a $130 million upgrade plan and leaving BPL to handle only power generation.

September

- Tariff Consultant Search: On September 7, 2026, URCA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire independent consultancies to review upcoming utility rate adjustment requests.
- Grand Bahama Rate Restructuring: On September 15, 2026, the Grand Bahama Utility Company formally requested a rate restructuring to fund infrastructure upgrades required after historic climate impacts.

Trinidad and Tobago

- The Trinidad and Tobago Government maintained its pledge to stall broad-based utility price increases, diverging from independent regulatory recommendations.
- The Energy sector infrastructure and grid-access frameworks evaluated at Upstream Forum 2026, hosted by the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago on September 16, 2026.
- Energy regulators and industry leaders convened on September 23, 2026, for a specialized workshop titled Decommissioning Excellence: Preparing Trinidad & Tobago's Energy to address upcoming decommissioning guidelines.

United States Virgin Islands (USVI)

- Electric LEAC Surcharge: Held flat at 22.22¢ per kWh through the summer, stabilizing consumer rates but failing to capture surging true fuel costs.
- Water and Power Authority (WAPA) Deferred Fuel Debt: $120 million was officially written off, clearing ratepayer liability while worsening WAPA's cash-strapped balance sheet.
- Virgin Islands Public Services Commission (PSC) Rate Investigations: Formally suspended indefinitely as utility structural oversight halted due to unpaid utility regulatory fees.
- Federal Compliance: Marked non-compliant in August and September after missing infrastructure reporting deadlines, triggering a federal show-cause order for sanctions.
- October Emergency Hike: Immediately following this reporting window, WAPA declared an

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emergency and successfully petitioned the PSC for a 3-cent-per-kWh LEAC hike to 25.22¢, citing intense global fuel pressures.

Non-Energy Telecom Actions

- Carrier Recertifications Approved: The PSC completed its annual telecommunications oversight during the September 8 session, approving Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) recertifications for multiple regional telecom providers to ensure uninterrupted federal subsidy compliance.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) regulatory events centered heavily on alleviating severe cost burdens for local energy consumers through a newly launched government subsidy program.

Electricity & Energy Regulation

- Launch of the TCIG Fuel Factor Relief Program: To protect consumers from skyrocketing global energy costs, the Turks and Caicos Islands Government (TCIG) launched an emergency Fuel Factor Relief Program spanning from July through October 2026.
- Fuel Factor Rate Capped: Under this regulation, eligible residential customers (those with a three-month rolling average bill under $1,500) had their Fuel Factor Rate capped at US$0.22 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). The government absorbed and paid any overages directly to the utility on behalf of the citizens.
- Massive July Rate Spikes: Regulatory interventions became vital after a steep climb in energy generation costs. In July 2026, the unprotected Fuel Factor Rate surged by 42.4% to $0.3017 per kWh in Providenciales, North Caicos, and Middle Caicos, and by 34.2% to $0.2636 per kWh in Grand Turk and Salt Cay. These changes took place under the banner of the territory's sole electric provider following its highly publicized rebranding from FortisTCI to Pelican Energy TCI, marking a structural pivot toward affordability and service reliability.

Fuel Market & Consumer Oversight

In September 2026, the Department of Trade, Industry and Fair Competition (DTIFC) deployed comprehensive fuel market reports under the Consumer Protection Ordinance. This regulatory move aimed to enforce transparency and empower consumers amid fluid local market pricing trends.

Telecommunications Regulation

- On July 1, 2026, the TCI Telecommunications Commission issued a formal directive urging consumers to utilize official complaint channels to escalate lingering network and service issues rather than relying solely on provider hotlines.
- Telecommunications Commission advanced its infrastructure modernization agenda on August 20, 2026, by executing a formal Signing and Presentation of Licences Ceremony to regulate spectrum expansion and wireless network operators.

Dominica Switches On: The Caribbean's Geothermal Moment

> *This year Dominica became the first CARICOM state to put geothermal power on its national grid. The 10 MW plant at Laudat, in the Roseau Valley, is the result of four decades of study and 15 years of drilling, financing and persistence. It now gives the region proof that geothermal can be delivered in a small island system.*

From concept to commissioning

Dominica's volcanic potential has been studied since the 1980s (Enlit World n.d.). Exploration

drilling began in Laudat in 2011 and 2012, part-funded by the European Union and France's AFD, with the Regional Council of Guadeloupe as a lead partner. At the time, the vision was a 120 MW plant exporting power to Guadeloupe and Martinique (Government of Dominica 2012). That export plan stalled, and Dominica turned instead to a smaller plant sized for its own grid. It created the DGDC in 2016 to take the project forward. From 2017, the World Bank financed the production and reinjection wells. Ormat signed to build and run the plant in December 2023, and the contract for new transmission lines and substations followed in October 2024.

The plant began exporting to the grid in March 2026 (Dominica News Online 2026). Ormat reported commercial operation with its second-quarter results, in August (ThinkGeoEnergy 2026). Commissioning was not trouble-free. Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit acknowledged outages linked to testing and system integration in the early months (WIC News 2026).

The players and the money

The project rests on a public-private structure. The **Government of Dominica** and the **DGDC** led development and built the transmission network. **Ormat Technologies**, through its local company, holds a 25-year concession to design, build, own and operate the plant. **DOMLEC**, the national utility, buys the output under a 25-year power purchase agreement and operates the new grid assets (World Bank 2026).

The plant itself cost about US$68 million (WIC News 2026). The wells and grid works were financed separately through the World Bank. The UK, New Zealand and SIDS DOCK also supported the project's development (WIC News 2026).

Funder	US$ million	Purpose
Caribbean Development Bank	34.8	Loan towards the power plant
CARICOM Development Fund	15.0	Loan towards the power plant
Ormat and commercial lenders	about 18	Private equity and debt for the plant
World Bank (IDA)	38.5	Wells, transmission, and substations
Global Environment Facility	5.9 grant, 5.5 guarantee	Grid works; payment security under the PPA
Government of Dominica	5.9	Counterpart funding, taxes, and duties

Source: World Bank (2026). Plant and grid financing are shown separately and do not sum to a single project cost.



Photo Credit: https://pressroom.oecs.int/dominicas-geothermal-power-plant-on-track-for-christmas-completion (sourced from internet)

What the plant delivers

The plant is expected to produce about 83 GWh a year and to supply around 23,000 homes (World Bank 2026; Dominica News Online 2026).



In June 2026, geothermal already provided about 43 per cent of Dominica's electricity, and that share is expected to reach about 60 per cent in 2027 (ThinkGeoEnergy 2026). DOMLEC buys the power at US$0.135 per kWh, against US$0.20 to 0.22 for the diesel it displaces. Over the life of the plant, fuel savings are estimated at about US$182 million (World Bank 2026).

Who is next?

Dominica's success comes as several neighbours advance their own projects, many under the OECS GEOBUILD programme, which is supported by the CDB, the EU and the IDB (OECS 2025b).

- **St Kitts and Nevis.** Nevis is preparing to drill for a 30 MW plant, backed by about US$51.6 million from the Green Climate Fund through the CDB and IDB, and US$20 million from the Saudi Fund for Development. The drill rig was being shipped from Iceland in mid-2026 (Nevis Island Administration 2026).
- **Grenada.** An expanded drilling campaign at Mount St Catherine runs to June 2028, funded by the CDB and the UK, with co-financing from the IDB, the GEF, the EU and Italy (Caribbean Development Bank 2026).
- **Saint Lucia.** Geothermal testing has intensified, and drilling contracts have been revised to control costs (OECS 2025a).
- **St Vincent and the Grenadines.** Three wells drilled in 2019 found high temperatures but low permeability, and work has continued to make them productive (ThinkGeoEnergy 2020).

Why it matters to regulators.

Dominica shows that geothermal can work in a small market when risk is shared sensibly. Public money took the drilling risk, a private operator took the construction and operating risk, and a guarantee covered the utility's payments. PPA pricing, cost pass-through and grid code compliance all run through the regulator, so OOCUR members will be central to turning geothermal's promise into lower and more stable tariffs.

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Q3 and Q4 Conference Calendar

Telecommunications, Water and Wastewater, and Electricity | 19 June to 31 December 2026

Month	Electricity	Water and Wastewater	Telecommunications
June (from 19th)	*Nil*	*Nil*	*Nil*
July	**CARILEC Engineering and Procurement Conference.** Guyana, 26 to 30 July.	*Nil*	*Nil*
August	*Nil*	**World Water Week.** Stockholm, 23 to 27 August. *[International]*	**CANTO 2026 Conference.** Dominican Republic, 16 to 19 August.
September	**CARIF (Caribbean Infrastructure Forum).** Miami, 15 to 16 September. Energy and water infrastructure. **WFER IX (World Forum on Energy Regulation).** Tbilisi, Georgia, 21 to 24 September. *[International]*	**CARIF (Caribbean Infrastructure Forum).** Miami, 15 to 16 September. Energy and water infrastructure.	**CTU ICT Week 2026.** French Guiana, 14 to 18 September. **ITU Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR-26).** September, venue to be announced. *[International]* **ITU IPEC-26 (Americas).** 28 September to 2 October, venue to be announced.
October	**Caribbean Renewable Energy Forum (CREF).** Panama City, 14 to 16 October. **CARILEC CAREC Conference.** The Bahamas, 18 to 22 October. Regulatory Roundtable on 18 October.	**CWWA 35th Annual Conference.** Venue to be confirmed, 12 to 16 October. **Leadership Programme: Water and Sanitation Sector Governance and Reform.** Portugal, 26 to 28 October. *[International]*	**ITU IPEC-26 (Americas).** Concludes 2 October.
November	**NARUC Annual Meeting and Education Conference.** Puerto Rico, 8 to 11 November. Covers all utilities.	*Nil*	**ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP-26).** Doha, Qatar, 9 to 27 November. *[International]*
December	**CARILEC Utility Automation and Innovation Symposium.** Jamaica, 30 November to 1 December.	**UN 2026 Water Conference.** United Arab Emirates, 2 to 4 December. *[International]*	**Connected Caribbean Summit.** Miami, 1 to 4 December.

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Notes to Conference Calendar

Unmarked events are Caribbean or regionally focused. items flagged [International] are global gatherings worth tracking but are not region-specific.

CWWA 2026 the venue is not yet confirmed; recent editions have most often been held at the Hyatt Regency, Port of Spain. The GWP-C High-Level (ministerial) Forum usually runs alongside it.

CARILEC CAREC the invitation-only Regulatory Roundtable on 18 October is the key session for regulators; post-conference training runs to 22 October.

NARUC Annual dates follow NARUC's official events page (8 to 11 November). One registration microsite lists 15 to 18 November, so reconfirm before booking.

WFER IX the ninth World Forum on Energy Regulation, hosted by GNERC under ICER, is the leading global gathering for energy regulators. Dates follow the official forum site.

CARIF the Caribbean Infrastructure Forum spans energy, water, transport, and digital. It appears under both Electricity and Water because it covers both.

Portugal leadership programme added as supplied. The exact title and 26 to 28 October dates could not be independently confirmed against a public listing, so reconfirm with the organiser (likely LIS-Water with the IDB, under the RegWAS LAC partnership).

CARILEC Utility Automation and GSR-26 / IPEC-26 dates and venues are provisional and should be reconfirmed with the organisers nearer the time.

Information compiled from the CTU 2026 ICT Calendar of Events, CANTO, CWWA, SIWI, UN-Water, CARILEC, New Energy Events (CREF and CARIF), GNERC and ICER (WFER), LIS-Water / IDB, and NARUC. Accessed 19 June 2026.

Reminders

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) Guidance Note Now Available

We are pleased to announce that the PPA Guidance Note has been completed. This document contains important information and updates for our network.

To review the guidance note, please request the access code by emailing admin@newoocur.org.

Join the OOCUR Consultancy Register

Eligible OOCUR members are reminded that registration for the online Consultancy Register is open. Sign up today to ensure your profile and expertise are visible to the network.

Visit our website www.newoocur.org to register and complete your online profile.

Join Our Committees: Openings on Audit & Finance and Water & Wastewater Committees

We are currently seeking dedicated individuals to join our Audit and Finance Committee as well as our Water and Wastewater Committee.

These committees play a vital role in our organization so, whether you want to lend your own skills or know someone else who would be perfect for the role, we want to hear from you. Please send your expressions of interest or recommendations to admin@newoocur.org.

If you wish to be featured in any of our quarterly editions, kindly submit your articles and photos to: admin@newoocur.org

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