



**Australian Government**

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**Department of the Environment and Water Resources  
Australian Greenhouse Office**

# **The Australian Government Renewable Remote Power Generation Programme**

*Residential and Medium-scale  
Programme Guidelines*

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These guidelines are available electronically at [www.greenhouse.gov.au/rebates](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/rebates)

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Department of the Environment and Water Resources

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# Renewable Remote Power Generation Programme Residential and medium-scale Programme guidelines

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The Renewable Remote Power Generation Programme (RRPGP) provides rebates for households, communities, not-for-profit, business, government and other organisations, in those areas of Australia not close to a main-grid, to support the installation of renewable generation systems.

Rebates of up to 50 per cent of the capital cost of renewable generation and essential enabling equipment are available to applicants that fully comply with the eligibility requirements and procedures outlined in these guidelines.

**To be eligible, applicants must have their *Pre-purchase application* approved by the administrator before buying and installing new renewable generation systems.**

These guidelines cover remote power rebates less than \$200,000. For larger systems, the *Major project – Programme guidelines* and procedures apply.

Rebates are available for both new systems and for renewable generation additions to existing systems. An applicant may apply more than once but all eligibility requirements must be met for any rebates to apply.

For the details of the administrator, please phone **1300 137 880** or go to [www.greenhouse.gov.au/renewable/rrpgp](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/renewable/rrpgp)

## Terms you need to know

**Administrator** The organisation that approves the *Pre-purchase application* and *Rebate application*.

**Applicant** The future owner of the renewable generation system.

**Designer** The person who designs your renewable generation system. They must hold accreditation from the Business Council for Sustainable Energy or be an appropriately experienced member of the Institute of Engineers Australia.

**Supplier** The organisation that supplies the major components and is responsible for assisting with honouring any major component warranty claims.

**Installer** The person who installs the renewable generation equipment. They must hold accreditation from the Business Council for Sustainable Energy or be an appropriately experienced Licensed Electrical Contractor or be directly supervised by a Business Council for Sustainable Energy Accredited installer. By law, all work involving voltages above 50V AC or 115V DC must be carried out by a Licensed Electrical Contractor.

**Main-grid** Defined as the National Electricity Grid in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and SA, along with the Mount Isa Grid (Queensland), the Darwin-Katherine grid (NT) plus the South-West and North-West grids in WA.

**Mini-grid** Defined as the many small grids located throughout Australia that are not part of the main-grid. Examples include Tibooburra and Lord Howe Island (NSW), Birdsville and Boulia (Queensland), Coober Pedy and Oodnadatta (SA).

## Renewable generation and essential enabling equipment

These terms are defined in section 52 of these guidelines.

## Applicant requirements

1. The applicant must be the purchaser of the new renewable generation system.
2. For systems serving private residences:
  - a) the applicant must be the owner of the land on which the residence is located; and
  - b) the system must primarily supply a residential dwelling that is the permanent place of residence of the applicant or of a specified permanent occupant.
3. For systems serving communities:
  - a) the applicant must be the governing authority of the community or an appropriately authorised representative; and
  - b) the system must primarily supply facilities that are a key part of the community.
4. For systems powering incorporated not-for-profit, business, government and other organisations:
  - a) the ABN must be provided and the applicant must be the owner or management authority of the not-for-profit, business, agency or other organisation; and
  - b) the system must primarily supply facilities that are a key part of the organisation's operations.
5. For systems installed by an Independent Power Producer (IPP) to supply electricity to a third party:
  - a) the ABN must be provided and the applicant must be the owner or management authority of the IPP business; and
  - b) the applicant must have a power purchase agreement with the third party.
6. The renewable generation system must primarily supply electricity to facilities that form a key part of the applicant's operations or, for IPPs, must primarily supply electricity to a third party under a power purchase agreement with the applicant.
7. Facilities served by the system must be permanent, must be approved by the local shire and comply with local shire requirements, must comply with all other relevant laws and regulations and must obtain all necessary approvals.
8. The renewable generation system must reduce reliance on fossil fuel generation at a site that is not close to a main-grid. For the purposes of this programme, the main-grid is defined as the National Electricity Grid in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and SA, along with the Mount Isa Grid (Queensland), the Darwin-Katherine grid (NT) plus the South-West and North-West grids in WA.
9. For the purposes of this programme, not close means at least 1 kilometre from the nearest main-grid line. Applicants less than 1 kilometre from a main-grid line must provide written evidence from the local network service provider that the total cost to connect to the main-grid is more than \$30,000. Quotes for underground power lines will only be accepted where written evidence is provided regarding the compulsory requirement for underground power lines.
10. Applicants just short of the \$30,000 main-grid estimated connection cost threshold may be eligible. To be considered, applicants must attach a one page letter of explanation with the *Pre-purchase application* and guarantee to repay the rebate if the site is connected to the main-grid within five years following installation of the renewable generation system.
11. Applicants may be required to demonstrate that a fossil fuel power system would otherwise have been used. Rebates will not be available for power systems that would almost certainly use renewable generation anyway, such as but not limited to solar lights, telecommunication repeater stations, railside signals, harbour signals, emergency roadside telephones and similar applications.
12. Applicants may be required to guarantee to repay the rebate if the site is connected to a main-grid within five years following installation of the renewable generation system.
13. Facilities that will be powered by the renewable generation system must not be, nor previously have been, connected to a main-grid or to a non-fossil fuel based mini-grid.

14. Matching funding for the renewable generation system may come from any source except for other funding provided through the Australian Greenhouse Office or other Australian Government rebate or grant programmes.
15. The applicant must ensure that all equipment on which a rebate has been obtained under this programme remains at the specified location for at least five years following installation, (with the exception of batteries that have reached the end of their life or other equipment that is beyond repair). The applicant must demonstrate the right to operate at the specified site for at least five years.
16. The applicant must provide details of the facilities which will be served by the renewable generation system, including current electricity usage, expected future demand and any expected load growth.
17. Applicants must ensure that sufficient resources and expertise will be available for the successful implementation of projects. Applicants must ensure that matching funding is available, that the supplier, designer and installer requirements of this programme are satisfied and that sufficient resources will be available for the ongoing operation and maintenance of the system.
18. Applicants must enter into an agreement with suppliers of renewable generation systems in regards to operating, maintaining and repairing the proposed system.

### **System requirements**

19. Renewable generation and essential enabling equipment on which a rebate is sought must be new and must be purchased after a *Pre-purchase application* has been approved by the administrator. Services essential for the implementation of systems must be paid for and provided after a *Pre-purchase application* has been approved (with the exception of design services and energy reviews).
20. Expenditure on renewable generation equipment (defined in the *Rebates available* section) must be at least 30 per cent of the total cost of equipment and services on which a rebate is sought.
21. The minimum size of the renewable generation component of the system is 450 W peak output.
22. Renewable generation and essential enabling equipment must be new, reliable, capable of operating successfully in remote areas, safe and must meet relevant Australian and International standards and electricity regulations. Renewable generation systems must meet all relevant government regulations and all relevant approvals must be obtained.
23. Appropriate warranties for individual components must be provided and documented in the *Operation Manual*. Clear evidence should be provided that batteries are suitable for the purpose proposed. Manufacturer warranties for all major components must be for a period of one year or more, with the exception of photovoltaic modules for which manufacturer warranties must be for a period of ten years or more.
24. All applications for a rebate of \$10,000 or more must include a reliable means of measuring and recording total electricity consumption from the system. For integrity of data, a meter will be required regardless of whether an inverter or other equipment is capable of providing similar data. Applications for a rebate of \$100,000 or more may require an appropriate means of recording renewable generation contribution.
25. Renewable generation systems are defined as an electricity supply using any source of energy that can be used without permanently depleting its reserves, including solar, wind, hydro and biomass. Systems must be eligible to generate Renewable Energy Certificates under the Australian Government's Mandatory Renewable Energy Target legislation and must also provide a greenhouse benefit for Australia.
26. For biomass, if the organic matter was produced sustainably then it is considered to be a renewable energy resource. Biomass systems must demonstrate long-term availability of fuel sources (more than five years) and may need to provide evidence of long-term contracts for fuel supply.
27. Biomass generators will not be approved for residential sized systems. The minimum size for a biomass generator is 30 kW electrical peak output. Generation systems that can use fossil fuel or biofuel are only eligible for 50 per cent of the cost of the essential works to convert to biofuel operation.
28. Rebates are available for both stand-alone renewable generation systems and for mini-grid connected renewable generation systems that are connected to local, fossil fuel powered electricity networks outside of the main-grid.

## Supplier requirements

29. Suppliers of renewable generation systems must demonstrate a capability to provide ongoing support for systems and equipment supplied, including financial soundness of the organisation, ability to provide technical information and advice, ability to assist in the repair and maintenance of systems, ability to provide replacement components and ability to assist in honouring warranty claims.
30. Suppliers must demonstrate a previous history as a supplier of systems similar to those proposed in funding applications or must possess a strong understanding of power systems incorporating renewable generation for remote applications, a good understanding of environmental conditions experienced in remote areas, a thorough knowledge of relevant standards and other requirements, a high awareness of commercially available system components and technologies and previous experience in a similar supply role.
31. Where the supplier will not install the system or directly oversee the installation, the supplier must provide the installer with a full wiring diagram, instructions on locating system components and information on commissioning the system.
32. Suppliers must enter into an agreement with an applicant that sets out:
  - a) the roles and responsibilities of the supplier and the applicant for operating, maintaining and repairing the system;
  - b) the availability of support for the system in case of difficulties;
  - c) manufacturer warranties for individual components and supplier warranties for the complete system (for both break-down and performance), including supplier procedures for assessing warranty claims and responsibility for meeting costs associated with warranty claims; and
  - d) the availability of repair services and replacement components (availability of replacement components, local stockists of components, local providers of repair services, etc).

Under this agreement, responsibility for operating, maintaining and repairing the system may rest with the applicant where this is agreed with the supplier. For this situation, the capability of the applicant (or a contracted service provider) to carry out operational and maintenance tasks may need to be demonstrated.
33. Where applications are made for the addition of renewable generation to an existing system, the agreement need only apply to equipment that is subject to the application.
34. Suppliers must provide an *Operation Manual* which includes:
  - a) a list of equipment supplied, including warranties and manufacturers' documentation;
  - b) a system electrical connection diagram;
  - c) original load estimation details, including expected daily and peak load requirements;
  - d) expected system performance, including contribution from renewable and fossil fuel generation;
  - e) a description of metering incorporated into system components and any additional metering;
  - f) operational procedures for the system, including basic control characteristics of the system such as auto/manual generator start, timed generator start/stops, etc. – further information should be available in manufacturers' documentation;
  - g) a guide to shutting down, isolating and re-starting the system for maintenance and emergencies; and
  - h) maintenance procedures and timetable.
35. Suppliers must be adequately insured for the purposes of supplying equipment and systems proposed in applications. At a minimum public liability insurance with \$5 million cover is required.
36. Renewable generation systems provided by suppliers who are in breach of these guidelines may be deemed not eligible for Australian Government rebates.

## Designer requirements

37. The system must be designed by a person holding design accreditation from the Business Council for Sustainable Energy or by an appropriately experienced member of the Institute of Engineers Australia.
38. The designer must have demonstrated experience and competence in designing systems similar to those proposed in funding applications, and must possess a strong understanding of power systems incorporating renewable generation for remote applications, a good understanding of environmental conditions experienced in remote areas of Australia, a thorough knowledge of relevant standards and other requirements, a high level of awareness of commercially available system components and technologies including previous experience in a similar design role.
39. The system must be designed in accordance with relevant standards and the provisions of any relevant electricity regulations.
40. Systems must be designed to meet given load demands, must be capable of operating successfully in remote areas of Australia, must meet the needs of the applicant and must be safe. For applicants that will operate and maintain systems themselves, it is strongly recommended that designs include simple operator interface, plug in/plug out components and robust equipment that has been demonstrated to operate reliably in remote areas and harsh climates.
41. Designers should be adequately insured for the purposes of designing renewable generation systems proposed in applications.
42. Renewable generation systems designed by designers who are in breach of these guidelines may be deemed not eligible for Australian Government rebates.

## Installer requirements

43. All work involving voltages in excess of 50V AC or 115V DC must be carried out by a Licensed Electrical Contractor.
44. The system must be installed by a person holding installation accreditation from the Business Council for Sustainable Energy or by an appropriately experienced Licensed Electrical Contractor.
45. If the installer does not have the qualifications listed in section 44, they must be directly supervised by a Business Council for Sustainable Energy accredited installer.
46. The system must be installed in accordance with relevant standards and with the provisions of the relevant electricity regulations. For the addition of components to an existing system, the existing system must be safe. Any wiring or electrical installation incorporated within the facilities served by a system must be safe.
47. A *Notice of Completion* or similar certification must be submitted to the appropriate authority upon completion of electrical work involving voltages in excess of 50V AC or 115V DC.
48. Installers must be adequately insured for the purposes of installing renewable generation systems proposed in applications. At a minimum public liability insurance with \$5 million cover is required.
49. Renewable generation systems installed by installers who are in breach of these guidelines may be deemed not eligible for Australian Government rebates.

## Rebates available

50. Applicants that fully satisfy the requirements of this programme will be entitled to a rebate of up to 50 per cent of the capital costs of eligible renewable generation equipment, essential enabling equipment and services. For new photovoltaic systems (not upgrades) connected to a fossil fuel powered mini-grid, the rebate will be \$8 per watt (up to a maximum of \$8,000) or 50 per cent of eligible costs whichever is the greater.
51. Rebates are available for both new renewable generation systems and additions of new equipment to existing systems.
52. Capital costs of renewable generation systems comprise the costs of the following components:
- Renewable generation equipment**
- a) photovoltaic arrays and associated fixed or tracking support structures, maximum power point trackers, charge regulators, cable and circuit protection;
  - b) wind turbines and associated towers, control equipment, dump loads, cable and circuit protection;
  - c) micro-hydro generation and associated penstock, piping, control equipment, dump loads and circuit protection;
  - d) solar thermal generation collectors and associated piping, heat engines, coupled generators, support structures and control equipment;
  - e) biomass combustion or conversion generation systems and associated heat engines, coupled generators and control equipment (for generation equipment capable of using fossil fuel or biofuel, rebates are only available for the cost of the essential works to convert the standard fossil fuel generator to run on biofuel);
  - f) other renewable energy generating equipment or systems that may become available. Unproven technologies are not eligible;
- Essential enabling equipment**
- g) including inverters, batteries, battery chargers, battery trays and stands, cabling, conduit, fuses, DC circuit breakers, isolation and changeover switches, DC switchboards, warning signs, operation manuals, meters and structures used solely for housing essential enabling equipment;
- Essential non-equipment expenditure**
- h) including design, a review of energy use, freight, installation and commissioning.
53. A list of the costs of major individual components and services broken down into the three categories given above must be provided in the *Pre-purchase application* form.
54. Rebates are not available to cover the costs of services (such as labour, freight, use of machinery etc.) provided by applicants.
55. Rebates are only available for equipment and services for which valid tax invoices or receipts are provided.
56. Where an essential piece of equipment or an essential service on which a rebate is sought relates to both equipment eligible for a rebate and equipment not eligible for a rebate, e.g. a structure that is dedicated to housing both a battery bank and a diesel generator, then the rebate on that piece of equipment or service will be calculated on a pro rata basis.
57. For private residences, rebates are calculated as up to 50 per cent of the GST-inclusive eligible capital costs of systems.
58. For organisations and businesses, rebates are calculated as up to 50 per cent of the GST-exclusive eligible capital costs of systems. For organisations and businesses, there may be tax implications from receiving a rebate, please consult an appropriate financial advisor for advice.

59. This programme does not provide rebates for:

**Non eligible equipment and services**

- a) renewable generation equipment that is not new or has been purchased before a *Pre-purchase application* has been approved;
  - b) renewable generation equipment considered to be excessive for the electrical load demands of a particular facility;
  - c) equipment or services that are not considered essential for a renewable generation system, including spare parts and back-up units;
  - d) equipment that will replace existing operational equipment that is appropriate for a given situation;
  - e) equipment that will replace existing damaged equipment that is easily repairable;
  - f) equipment replacing damaged equipment that is insured;
  - g) new equipment replacing equivalent existing equipment that has received an Australian Government rebate within the last five years;
  - h) equipment and services contributed by applicants;
  - i) land and any costs associated with land tenure;
  - j) solar hot water systems, energy efficient appliances or equipment;
  - k) diesel, petrol or other fossil fuel generators and control equipment specific to the fossil fuel generator;
  - l) equipment required to distribute electricity from the site of the power system to any facilities supplied by the system;
  - m) dams or major civil works for micro-hydro systems;
  - n) fuels for biomass systems;
  - o) renewable energy systems primarily used for water pumping; and
  - p) any other renewable energy equipment that is not involved with the generation of electricity (e.g. solar thermal heating systems).
60. Where it is considered that the cost of a renewable generation system is too high then the applicant will be required to justify the costs or to obtain two additional quotes for the supply of a similar system.
61. The Australian Greenhouse Office has the final determination as to what systems and costs are eligible for a rebate under these guidelines. Unproven technologies are not eligible.
62. The maximum rebate available under the Renewable Remote Power Generation Programme – Residential and medium-scale is \$200,000.

## Application procedure

63. The procedure for applying for a rebate under this programme is as follows:

### **Step 1**

Read the programme guidelines and information about renewable generation systems and energy efficiency.

### **Step 2**

Contact designers and suppliers of systems to help assess electricity demands, conduct a review of energy use and determine the appropriate type and size of system required. It is recommended that the applicant contact more than one potential supplier.

### **Step 3**

Complete a *Pre-purchase application* form in conjunction with the supplier and designer, and submit it to the administrator together with the required attachments. The *Pre-purchase application* must be approved by the administrator before equipment subject to a funding application is purchased and installed.

### **Step 4**

The administrator assesses the application and approval is granted if it meets the requirements of the programme, subject to available funding. All applicants will be advised of the outcome by mail usually within six weeks of the administrator receiving a fully completed *Pre-purchase application*.

### **Step 5**

If the *Pre-purchase application* is approved, purchase and install the specified renewable generation system. Approvals are valid for a period of six months from the date of approval, after which the approval expires and applicants must re-apply to be considered for a rebate.

### **Step 6**

When the installation of a renewable generation system or upgrade has been completed, forward to the administrator a completed *Rebate application* form including all required attachments. Required attachments may include (but are not necessarily limited to) relevant receipts or invoices marked paid, a *Notice of Completion* or similar certification, copies of signed maintenance, power purchase contracts, a basic diagram of the installation clearly showing the location of equipment plus photographs clearly showing all equipment subject to a rebate and facilities powered by the renewable generation system.

### **Step 7**

The administrator will assess the *Rebate application* and the details of the installed system against information provided in the original *Pre-purchase application*. A revised rebate may be calculated if there are any differences.

### **Step 8**

Payments of rebates will usually be actioned within six weeks of receipt of a fully and correctly completed *Rebate application* including all required attachments. The rebate will be paid to the applicant unless they sign in the *Rebate application* that they want the rebate paid to the supplier.

**Note:** The administrator requires full details (entered into the relevant forms or attached as required) to assess applications and reserves the right to suspend processing of incomplete applications until all necessary details have been provided. The administrator will advise any applicant so affected of the necessary details required to complete an application.

## **Applicant obligations**

### 64. *Performance reporting*

The applicant must complete and submit annually a simple report on the performance of a system for up to five years. The report form will be sent out each year by the administrator. There may be other requests for system performance information.

### 65. *Equipment to remain at project location*

The applicant must ensure that all equipment on which a rebate has been obtained under this programme remains in operation at the specified location for at least five years following installation (with the exception of batteries that have reached the end of their life or other equipment that is beyond repair). If the system is moved or sold within five years of installation, the rebate may be required to be repaid.

### 66. *Inspection of systems*

During the five years following installation, after reasonable request, a representative of the Australian Government or its agents may visit and photograph the installation and site in order to assess compliance with these programme guidelines.

### 67. *Safety*

Appropriately qualified government representatives (or their agents) may inspect installations at any time to ensure that systems comply with technical and safety requirements of relevant Australian and International Standards and the provisions of any relevant electricity regulations.

### 68. *Breach of contract*

Where it is deemed that a rebate recipient has breached the requirements of this programme, the recipient is obligated to rectify the breach or to repay the rebate. The administrator or the Australian Greenhouse Office may take legal action to recover rebates from rebate recipients that breach the requirements of this programme.

### 69. *Publicity of systems*

Applicants should ensure that any publicity about their renewable generation system acknowledges that a rebate was provided by the Australian Government.

## Rights reserved by the Australian Government or its agents

70. *No Australian Government or its agents warranty*

There is no warranty given or implied by the Australian Government or its agents on any aspect of an installation funded through this programme. The Australian Government and its agents accept no representations whatsoever for the quality of, or any other feature of, renewable generation systems for which rebates are approved.

71. *Indemnity*

The applicant acknowledges that neither the Australian Government nor any of its authorised representatives nor its agents accept any liability in respect of any claim or cause of action arising out of, or in relation to, any renewable generation system or equipment that is the subject of rebates. The applicant agrees that it will indemnify and keep indemnified the Australian Government and its agents for any claim or liability arising out of, or in relation to, a renewable generation system that is the subject of a *Pre-purchase application* or *Rebate application*.

72. *Information rights*

Information provided to administrators in or in relation to applications to the programme may be provided to other Government agencies as required. Administrators and Government agencies may use all information provided for the purposes of assessing applications and administering the programme. Administrators and the Australian Government reserve the right to use information of a non-confidential nature and aggregated data for the purposes of publicly reporting on the performance of the programme. Intellectual property rights in information developed as part of the programme, excluding commercially confidential information, remain the property of the Australian Government.

73. *Privacy and confidentiality of information provided in applications*

Information of a personal or confidential nature collected under this programme will be kept private and confidential by administrators and the Australian Government.

74. *Right to revise programme*

The Australian Government reserves the right to change these programme guidelines at any time. If changes are made, *Pre-purchase applications* approved prior to the changes will be unaffected. The Australian Government reserves the right to end the programme if available funds are exhausted or for any other circumstances. Any *Pre-purchase applications* approved prior to such a termination will be unaffected.

75. *Right to reject Pre-purchase application and Rebate application*

Applicants should not assume they will receive a rebate on submitting a *Pre-purchase application*. Administrators reserve the right to reject any *Pre-purchase application* and *Rebate application* that is considered to not meet the requirements set out in these guidelines.

## Further information

Further information is available by phoning **1300 137 880** or from **[www.greenhouse.gov.au/renewable/rpgrp](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/renewable/rpgrp)**

A list of Business Council for Sustainable Energy accredited installers is available from **[www.bcse.org.au/default.asp?id=119](http://www.bcse.org.au/default.asp?id=119)**