

Renewables Obligation (RO)

www.ofgem.gov.uk/ro

Essential guide - confirming commissioning of generating stations

This guide can help to establish the date your generating station was or will be commissioned in line with the definition provided in Renewables Obligation (RO) legislation.

Assuming you have made an application to us in advance of your station being commissioned, establishing this date is important as it signifies the date from which accreditation will be effective from. It will also determine the level of ROC support the electricity generated will realise.

Providing us with the right information first time reduces the risk of delays to your accreditation and you receiving renewable certificates.

This document is not intended to be a definitive legal guide. If you are in doubt as to the commissioning date of your station, you should seek your own independent legal or technical advice as appropriate.

For more detailed information, we encourage you to read the [‘Renewables Obligation: Guidance for Generators’](#).

Commissioning date

TIP 1: The commissioning date entered for question QA201 **must** match the date in the capacity table for QC237. If these do not match, your application could be delayed as we will ask you to correct it.

The commissioning date represents the date on which all relevant commissioning tests and procedures were completed such that your station was capable of commercial operation. The tests and procedures will vary depending on the type of generating station in question and what the usual industry standard practices are at the time your station is commissioned. If your station meets all relevant eligibility requirements the scheme, it will be eligible from the later of the following:

- the date the application was received by us or
- the date on which it was commissioned.

We ask that you provide suitable evidence during the accreditation process to show that a station has been commissioned. For accreditation to be granted under the RO, in addition to other eligibility criteria being met, the following definition of “commissioned” must be met:

“Commissioned”, in relation to a generating station, means the completion of such procedures and tests in relation to that station as constitute, at the time they are undertaken, the usual industry standards and practices for commissioning that type of generating station in order to demonstrate that that generating station is capable of commercial operation.

TIP 2: If you state a commissioning date that is more than two months in the future you will be asked if you wish to apply for preliminary accreditation. Select ‘No’ if you wish to apply for full accreditation i.e. you can only apply for full accreditation up to two months before commissioning.

Demonstrating your generating station has been commissioned

As the applicant you must produce documentary evidence that demonstrates the generating station has been commissioned. We encourage you to provide as much evidence as you can in your application to show your generating station meets the definition of commissioned. The relevant documents for your generating station will vary depending on the renewable technology being used. In general the following documents can be considered as an example of a complete submission. Where these documents are available, they are the minimum that you’ll be expected to provide.

- 1) **An explanation as to why the commissioning date is **/**/******, with a brief timeline of the tests and procedures that led to commissioning on this date.
- 2) **The G59 witness test certificate** signed and dated by the relevant distribution network operator (DNO). This should state the DNO they are from and be signed by the testing engineer. If the DNO does not need to witness the G59 test, they should send a letter or email stating that they did not wish to witness the test. For generating stations in Northern Ireland, the G59 should normally include the accompanying Schedule 1A document signed by the DNO stating that they witnessed the testing or waived the right to witness the testing. Where a project is connected to a transmission system, we would expect to see equivalent documentation to prove that the transmission operator was content for the station to operate in parallel with its network.
- 3) **Independent written confirmation of the commissioning date** which could include a signed declaration or handover certificate by the installer or commissioning engineer who carried out the tests and procedures for commissioning. This should confirm the date the station and all relevant components were commissioned. We would also accept other forms of independent written confirmation.
- 4) **A signed statement from the installer or manufacturer of the generating equipment** confirming the generating station’s total installed capacity (TIC) and declared net capacity (DNC).
- 5) **Half hourly (HH) meter readings** showing first generation. Evidence of first export is useful to us in assessing the commissioning date but is not definitive. It may be the case that export took place before the station was capable of commercial operation. Conversely, a station may be capable of commercial operation before first export took place.

Where necessary, we may ask for more detailed information as each application is assessed on a case by case basis.

Please provide this evidence to allow us to process your application. You can email all documents to renewable@ofgem.gov.uk clearly stating the name of the generating station they refer to.

TIP 3: A G59 witness test certificate and commissioning certificate must state the date the testing took place, refer to the generating station name or location and be signed by the

testing engineer. If any tests could not be completed by the DNO on the commissioning date, you should explain why this was the case.

What can I do to establish the commissioned date?

You should provide a full and clear timeline of events leading up to the first generation, explain why the standard tests and procedures you have chosen are appropriate for your generating station and evidence that demonstrates when they were completed. Start by producing a timeline of the dates that key commissioning tests and procedures were completed - similar to the one below.

TIP 4: Remember to include the date that the station first started generating electricity.

Example timeline for a solar PV station

Date	Commissioning Test	Evidence
01 July 2014	DC string test	Documents 4a to 4g 'DC tests'
15 August 2014	Earthing test	Document 3 'Earthing'
20 August 2014	G59 test	Document 1 'G59 test'
21 August 2014	First generation	Document 5 'HH Data'
28 August 2014	Inverter commissioning	Document 6 'Inverters'
28 August 2014	Commissioning certificate	Document 2 'Commissioning Cert'

This clearly shows the dates relevant tests were completed, at what point the station began generating electricity and – importantly – the documentary evidence that supports this.

TIP 5: Check through the application and evidence of commissioning before submitting it to us. Are the application answers correct and consistent with the supporting documents? Have you explained any gaps in the information?

If in doubt get more help

We are here to help you complete your application and answer any queries you may have. You can contact us by email at renewable@ofgem.gov.uk or by calling **0207 901 7310** (choose option 2).

We can advise you on completing the application form but we cannot provide technical or legal advice. We are also unable to guide you on proposed generating stations if no one has submitted an application.

For more detailed information on the renewable obligation requirements and submitting an application, refer to the ['Applying for accreditation and claiming renewable obligation certificates'](#) section of our website.

TIP 6: Remember to gather the commissioned and TIC documents discussed above:

- 1) An explanation as to why the commissioning date is **/**/**** with a brief timeline of the tests and procedures before this date.
- 2) A copy of a G59 test signed by the witnessing Distribution Network Operator (DNO) or a letter or email from the DNO stating that it did not wish to witness the test.
- 3) A signed declaration from the installer or commissioning engineer confirming the date that the station commissioned.
- 4) A signed statement from the installer or manufacturer of the generating equipment confirming the TIC and DNC of the generating station.
- 5) Half hourly (HH) meter readings showing first generation.