

Dear Mr. Hall,

As an owner of a solar panel micro-generation system, I would like to offer my views and experience to you and your committee. I have been interested in contributing to a greener environment for many years and about thirty five years ago I installed two radiators painted black in our roof in order to harness the sun to heat our hot water. This was very successful, so much so that my interest in this area increased and about eleven years ago we installed a full set of electric producing panels in our bungalow. This preamble should let you know that I have been involved in green energy in some form or other for many years now.

In my opinion the price paid to people like me for surplus energy by Power N.I. is grossly unfair when compared to the price they charge. A more realistic figure should be arrived at by giving the producer a price nearer to the retail price charged and when this price is increased, as seems to happen with increased frequency, this price should also be increased relative to the new increased price. After all is 25% not a fair and decent profit rather than the present figure of almost 350%? I don't know many businesses which can buy raw materials at a cost price of just over 5p per unit and retail the same item at over 18p per unit. I would like to point out that profit was never a factor in my decision to fit solar panels which at that time cost me over £11,000 without any grant whatsoever. However I also feel that the surplus energy which is produced should be bought at a fair market price in order to help pay for my investment.

My second point concerns the artificial and unreasonable cap placed on our solar panel production by Power N.I. I believe that to limit production on solar panel owners discriminatory and mitigates most unfairly against what we are doing. We have installed our panels, as I stated, not with the desire nor intention to make money but rather to add our contribution to a greener environment. Surely in the present climate Power N.I. should be attempting to obtain the maximum supply possible from green sources? It does seem ludicrous that Power N.I. should be limiting the production of energy from green sources in favour of obtaining, and probably at greater expense, electricity from carbon rich fuels. It just doesn't make sense. If we can ever hope to reduce our carbon footprint I doubt if this is the way to go about it!

I trust that my views may be of some help in your deliberations,
Yours sincerely