

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 2 August 2018

ISEA welcomes Residential Rooftop Solar PV Scheme

Solar industry bolstered by further government support

The Irish Solar Energy Association (ISEA) welcomes the introduction of a grant scheme for rooftop solar PV by the Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DCCAE). The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) will be managing the scheme that will provide a contribution of up to €3,800 towards total installation costs.

The scheme outlines that any installation greater than 2kWp must install a battery to store excess energy. For installations 2kWp or less in size, it is recommended to install a hot water diverter and excess electricity will be used to heat water. SEAI outlines that this strategy encourages self-consumption towards 100%.

As is the norm when a grant scheme is introduced, the industry expands and competition increases. ISEA CEO Michael McCarthy said “it is great to see this grant scheme introduced and we commend SEAI on their speedy response to Minister Naughten’s call to action. It will encourage uptake and increase public understanding of solar energy. We would however call for review of planning restrictions for rooftop solar. Planning regulations were previously based on the threshold used by SEAI in assessing grants for solar thermal under the Greener Homes Scheme and have not been reviewed since 2008. The industry has changed dramatically in 10 years and regulations need to be adapted in line with this.”

The scheme is currently only open to residential buildings. Commenting on this, ISEA said “this grant scheme is a step in the right direction and we fully support the principle of self-consumption. We are hopeful that through further collaboration with DCCAE and SEAI it could be extended to include small scale commercial enterprises and community buildings. If this were to happen, ISEA would call for a Feed in Tariff (FIT) to be introduced for surplus energy exported to the grid. This would allow community buildings and small businesses throughout the country to earn revenue from the generation of clean energy. In the case of a school, revenue could be earned during the summer months when circa 80% of electricity produced would be exported.”

This grant scheme follows the publication of the High Level Design Paper on the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme by DCCAE last week. It is estimated that the proposals of both schemes will contribute to the creation of up to 7,000 jobs in the Irish solar industry through investment in both ground mount and rooftop solar.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITOR

Irish Solar Energy Association (ISEA)

The Irish Solar Energy Association (ISEA) was founded in May 2013. As the representative trade body on the Island of Ireland, ISEA is committed to bringing attention to the value of solar energy's contribution to Ireland's economic and environmental future. ISEA is committed to contributing to the development of viable renewable energy policies that support the development of solar in Ireland via lobbying activities, conferences, and other forums that bring key stakeholders together to shape policy.

<http://irishsolarenergy.org/>