

## **LICENSING PROCEDURE FOR SOLAR IMPORTERS DEALERS**

### **Background**

The Energy Regulation Board (ERB) has revised the licensing regime for solar equipment and this takes effect from 1st January 2017. The official public notification was placed in the print media in November and advertised via the public electronic media.

There will be a requirement for ALL importers of solar equipment to obtain a licence from the ERB and the importer must obtain a quality certification from the country of origin with each shipment. This can be provided by the manufacturing company stating that their product is certified by that country's standards bureau. Zambian standards are based on international IEC standards which are based on and are applicable internationally. The quality certification will be checked by Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) at the point of entry. This license requirement is in addition to the already existing license to manufacture, install and distribute solar equipment.

The new regime will also entail the payment of a 0.5% licence fee on annual turnover from the sale of solar PV panels, inverters, solar batteries (deep cycle batteries) and charge controllers ONLY. Dealers in solar lamps, solar lanterns, compact solar appliances with a built in solar panel of below 10w or appliances designed to work with a solar PV pane of up to 10W packaged together with the appliance WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO PAY the 0.5% licence fee despite having an import license.

The new regime is meant to protect the consumers from poor quality products that have flooded the Zambian market and at the same time safeguard the investment made by entities who comply with standards.

You can obtain the licence application form from the ERB website or visit or Licensing office (Legal Department) to obtain an application form and a checklist. There is a 0.1% licensing one off application fee on the cost of investment of setting up the solar business and a K50 fee for the form (This is not part of the new measures as it has been applicable to all applications all along).

During this period following the introduction of this new regime, we shall endeavour to expedite the licensing process so we advise you apply BEFORE making importation orders and not seek to apply when shipments have been stopped by the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) or Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) at the border as no special or exceptional procedures will be invoked for an omission to obtain a licence.

## Licensing Procedure

1. Download an application form and checklist from the ERB website at [www.erb.org.zm](http://www.erb.org.zm) or obtain a hard copy from the ERB offices in Lusaka, Kitwe, Livingstone or Chinsali.
2. Submit the completed form with the accompanying documents as specified in the checklist to any of our offices with the K50 fee for the form.
3. An economic assessment will be made of your investment capital and a one off 0.1% or one thousand Kwacha (K1,000) minimum licence application fee will be charged.
4. A technical inspection will be made of the premises of the applicant. The following features must be present to qualify for licence:
  - a. Adequate storage or warehouse facility
  - b. Work bench (distributors of small scale products e.g. lanterns) or workshop (large scale distributors & installers) for testing and preparing equipment to dispatch.
  - c. Trained Engineer/technician/technologist or craft certificate holder registered with the Engineering Institute of Zambia (EIZ). Proof of Engineering Registration Board and valid Practicing certificate issued by EIZ. In absence of valid 2017 practicing certificate, copy of Engineering Registration Board card and copy of renewal receipt for 2017 Practicing licence will be accepted. **\*Not applicable for imports of solar lanterns and solar equipment of 10W and below\***
  - d. Solar demonstration unit of equipment supplied by dealer. **\*Not applicable for licensees that do not supply directly to the public or are only involved in contracting for large scale installations\*.**

Note that the expedience with which the licence will be processed depends on the completeness of the information and supporting documentation supplied with the licence application.

Licence applications will not be rush through the process as a result of solar equipment being stopped at the point of entry into the country. Importers are advised to apply for the licence BEFORE making importation orders.