Draft Order laid before the Assembly under Article 66(2) of the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, for approval by resolution of the Assembly.

DRAFT STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2026 No.XXXX

ELECTRICITY

The Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Made - - - -	***
Coming into operation	***

The Department for the Economy ("the Department") makes the following Order in exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 52 to 55F and 66(3) of the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003(**a**)("the 2003 Order").

The Department has consulted the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation, the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland, electricity suppliers to whom this Order applies, and such generators of electricity from renewable sources in Northern Ireland and other persons as it considered appropriate in accordance with Article 55E of the 2003 Order.

In accordance with Article 66(2) of the 2003 Order, a draft of this Order was laid before and approved by a resolution of the Assembly.

Citation and commencement

1. —This Order may be cited as the Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026 and comes into operation on the day after the day on which it is made.

Amendments to the Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2009

2.—(1) The Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2009(**b**) is amended as follows.

In article 2(1) (interpretation), at the appropriate place, insert—

""consumer prices index" means

(a)the consumer prices index calculated and published by the Statistics Board(**c**) or

(b)where the index is not published for a month, any substituted index or figures published by the Statistics Board;"

(**a**) The Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (S.I. 2003/419 (N.I. 6)

(**b**) The Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2009 (S.R. 2009 No. 154), the relevant amendments are S.R. 2011 No. 169, S.R. 2014 No. 146, S.R. 2016 No. 110 and S.R. 2021 No. 139. There are other amendments which are not relevant.

(**c**) The Statistics Board was established by section 1 of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 (c. 18)

3. In article 40(4) (payments to discharge the renewables obligation)—

(a) omit the "and" after sub-paragraph (a);

(b) in sub-paragraph (b) for "for each obligation period thereafter", substitute "for each subsequent obligation period up to and including the obligation period starting on 1st April 2025";

(c) after sub-paragraph (b), insert–

"; and

(c) for each obligation period thereafter, the buy-out price for the previous obligation period increased or, as the case may be, decreased by the percentage increase or decrease in the consumer prices index over the 12 month period ending with 31st December in the previous obligation period (the resulting figure being rounded to the nearest penny, with any half of a penny being rounded upwards)."

Sealed with the Official Seal of the *** on ***

Name
Senior officer of the Department for the Economy

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

This Order amends the Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2009 (SR 2009/154) ("the 2009 Order").

The 2009 Order imposes on all electricity suppliers licensed under the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 that supply electricity in Northern Ireland, an obligation ("the renewables obligation") to produce a specified number of renewables obligation certificates ("NIROCs") in respect of each megawatt hour of electricity they supply to customers in Northern Ireland during periods known as "obligation periods".

The Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation ("Utility Regulator") are responsible for the administration of the renewables obligation issuing NIROCs to accredited renewable electricity generators based on their output. These certificates are sold to electricity suppliers with or without the associated renewable electricity.

In lieu of each NIROC, suppliers can also make a payment to the Utility Regulator at a set price (the "buy-out price"). The buy-out price is indexed to inflation and has changed in line with the retail prices index each year since the renewables obligation came into force. This Order provides for the buy-out price to increase (or decrease, as the case may be) in line with the consumer prices index instead of the retail prices index for all obligation periods from 1st April 2026 onwards.

A full impact assessment of the effect that this instrument will have on the costs of businesses, voluntary bodies and community bodies is available alongside this instrument on www.legislation.gov.uk and from the Department for the Economy NI, 39-49 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FD.

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