

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
References Committee
Inquiry into the Green Loans Program
Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Portfolio
Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Answers to questions on notice
June 2010

Question No: 8
Topic: Government development of
online booking system
Hansard Page ECA: 99-100

Senator Birmingham asked:

Senator BIRMINGHAM—How did it take until January or February to get an online model developed for a program that was funded in the 2008 budget?

Ms Leo—I am afraid my corporate memory does not stretch back.

Mr Thompson—I know there were a range of difficulties in terms of the IT provision and managing the contract to provide that and some other IT services as well. I think that was the fundamental reason.

Senator BIRMINGHAM—Could you take on notice when the government started to develop the online booking system. It sounds like it was outsourced. So could you take on notice the process by which it was outsourced, how much that contract cost, when the contract was let and any other relevant details about the process for that. Obviously everyone accepts that one of the most chronic failures of this program was the breakdown in the booking system, and perhaps we can get to the bottom of how that occurred. Yes, a spike in demand caused the call centre to essentially collapse but it was the fact that there was only a call centre to rely on that left the system vulnerable to that collapse in the first place. Could you take those details on notice, please?

Mr Thompson—Certainly.

Answer:

The Department commenced preliminary development of a bespoke online booking system in September 2008, for a planned deployment in January 2009.

The deadline for the deployment of the booking system was changed from January 2009 to July 2009. During this period, several options were explored to avoid development of a custom-built system.

Following consideration of existing booking systems, the decision was taken to continue with the development of the Green Loans booking system. Development was outsourced in September 2009, with deployment in January 2010.

The total cost of development of the booking system is not readily available as it was part of a broader contract for development of Green Loans Program IT systems.