

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: 4
Topic: Green loans assessments
Hansard Page ECA: 95-96

Senator Milne asked:

Senator MILNE—How many assessors are now working full-time because of the requirement that they can do only five assessments a week? And how many assessments are taking place in rural and regional Australia as opposed to metropolitan areas?

Mr Thompson—In terms of the number of assessors who are working full-time, no, we do not have data on that, and so we cannot comment on that.

Senator MILNE—What about rural and regional Australia?

Ms Leo—We do not have figures available to us on that kind of geographical breakdown. The most that we have in front of us is by state and territory.

Senator MILNE—Is there no intention of getting that? The argument clearly through rural and regional Australia is that, if you put a cap of five on the number of assessments that can be done in any week, no one in the country will be able to get an assessment done because it would not be worth anybody's while to pay to go out there for that limited number of assessments. Has any arrangement been made in recognition of that disadvantage with this program for rural and regional Australia?

Mr Thompson—We are very aware of that issue, given the conversations we have had with ABSA and individual assessors. I cannot add anything to my answer now, but it is one of the issues that we are considering how we might address it. To go back to your earlier question about access and postcode coverage, I would like to take that on notice to see whether we can provide some further information about that.

Answer:

As at 25 May 2010, 3,315 postcodes were serviced by assessors through the Green Loans Program. There were outstanding requests for assessments in 169 postcodes. The postcodes serviced by Green Loans assessors changes over time, as assessors are free to update the list of postcodes in which they are willing to work at any time.

More recently, additional analysis has been undertaken in relation to the number of assessments conducted per postcode area in preparation for the call for grant applications under Round 1 of the Green Start Program. This data, represented geographically, is available on the Department's website, under 'grant applicant information': <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/government/programs-and-rebates/greenstart.aspx>.

One consideration which will be taken into account when assessing grant applications under Round 1 of the Green Start Program is provision of services to regional and remote areas. One of the four merit criteria against which applications will be assessed calls for:

Demonstrated ability of the proposal to contribute to the Green Start objectives and any additional potential public benefits including the ability to deliver activities to regional and remote areas.