

Senate Inquiry into Green Loans

Dear Sir/Madam,

This submission refers to the effect of recent changes to the Green Loans program.

This program was made known to me in September 2009 and after some investigation I assessed that it was a positive program that offered some reward for work provided. The Green Loan component being a valid way of encouraging people to improve their energy efficiency.

I also discussed this with my son Aven who is a qualified tradesman plasterer who was finding it difficult to find work here on the Sunshine Coast due to lack of activity in the building sector.

We both decided to undergo training and understood that there was a reasonable expectation for future work in this worthwhile industry.

We undertook accredited training with "Environment Australia" at Nambour TAFE in November 2009 for which we outlaid considerable funds. This was a week long course that gave us a Certificate 3 qualification with the promise of a Certificate 4 upgrade course provided free at a later date.

We then had to obtain a Police Check, Insurance and pay an ABSA membership fee along with an assessor application fee. All of this around \$3,000.00 each and we have funded this through credit.

We then waited for the long drawn out process of accreditation and contracting. This involved:

9 days for the posted applications to be acknowledged as being received

- Further promises of 10 day periods for a receipt to be issued (this was not achieved)
- 10 days for it to be considered (this was not achieved)
- 10 days for an ID to be issued (this was not achieved)
- 10 days for a contract to be issued (this was not achieved)

We finally received our Assessor IDs on 12 March. But absolutely no advice was provided from DEWA about our contract applications.

While I understand that the program was mismanaged I wish to have recorded the absolute lack of concern and accountability that has been displayed towards my son and me. We are financially

disadvantaged and continue to pay for a program that was presented to us with a reasonable expectation that we could derive income and play a positive role in Australia's energy efficiency.

Apart from the lack of respect afforded by government to us, the following are listed as comment on the scheme as existed:

- The Green Loans component was considered a cost effective, efficient method of gaining commitment for assessments and actions in households to introduce energy efficient devices. In fact we were in the process of arranging a power lead in system so that we had the practical understanding to recommend to others. Of course this will not happen now.
- For householders to accept assessments they need some inducement. The Green Loan was exactly that regardless of whether they took up on it or otherwise.
- Training with accredited organizations was seen to be a key factor. I understand that many were trained by ad hoc organizations. It seems that accredited training should be the criteria for awarding contracts
- Organizations with no knowledge or desire to understand the program were actively tele marketing to maximize returns. How can this be a valid method of rolling out an efficient system? The formation of these groups was in fact encouraged by guidance provided by DEWA.
- The restriction now imposed on assessment (5 per week) make this a hobby and in fact it will take at least a month to cover outlays not considering ongoing charges (insurance, memberships, interest, operating expenses)

This program is a good one but needs control; I am concerned that the enquiry is not expected to be complete until 21 June 2010. The matter of individual financial circumstances requires better response than this! We are still holding insurance, ABSA membership and paying interest on outlays. This is simply unacceptable.

I encourage the Committee to consider interim measures to overcome this serious situation.

Yours Sincerely,

L. Hatton