

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2010
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Topic: Government Energy Efficiency

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Question: (Senator Birmingham)

What action has been taken in regard to the following 2007 Labor election commitments:

- a) Increase current requirements for new Commonwealth office buildings and leases to have a minimum five star Australian Building greenhouse rating (or equivalent).
- c) Set an objective to power Parliament House and all MP electorate offices with renewable and clean energy.

Answer:

- a) The Energy Efficiency in Government Operations policy, implemented in 2006, remains the Government's main environmental policy for Commonwealth agencies in relation to energy consumption. It sets energy efficiency targets for Commonwealth building use, to be met by June 2011. It also requires new Government leases or major refurbishments to attain 4.5 stars under the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) and a lease-based energy management framework known as the Green Lease Schedule to ensure that the building and tenancy operates at the agreed NABERS Energy rating.
- c) In relation to Parliament House under the *Parliamentary Precincts Act 1988*, the control and management of the Parliamentary Precincts lies with the Presiding Officers and not with the Executive arm of the Government.

The Government has invested in the GreenPower[®] program on behalf of the electorate offices of Senators and Members. On 30 June 2010, the Department of Finance and Deregulation entered into a three year contract with Australian CO2 Exchange Pty Ltd, trading as Ark Climate, to purchase Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) equal to 20 per cent of the electricity consumed in electorate offices during calendar year 2009. Ark Climate will purchase the equivalent number of RECs each year and manage the surrender of the RECs over the life of the contract. The purchase and surrender of the RECs will be subject the audit provisions of the GreenPower[®] program.