

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

**Topic: Green Loans – Reimbursement**

**Question reference number: CC51**

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**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010**

**Number of Pages: 1**

**Question:** (Senator Milne)

**Senator MILNE**—I take on board what you are saying. Mea culpa; the minister says it is not acceptable, and you say it is not acceptable. I raised this at the last estimates and said, ‘Can you assure me that people who are owed money have been reimbursed? Are you satisfied that we are up to the 30-day period for most people?’ The response was, ‘Yes, yes, yes’, that it was all fixed, and the software was fixed. It is not fixed.

Whilst I recognise the government is sorry, the fact is that people have not been paid. Could you please get me the information that I am asking for?

Of the 143,000 assessments that have been completed, how many invoices remain outstanding and how many of them are beyond the 30 days? Was it not an undertaking that people would be paid in 30 days?

**Senator Wong**—We will take the first two on notice.

...

**Senator MILNE**—Just before the dinner break I was asking some questions about the 143,000 completed assessments and the number of invoices outstanding. I acknowledge the department has said they will come back to me. If you cannot come back to me with the numbers now, I would like to know what arrangements are in place to have those invoices that are outside the 30-day period paid as a matter of urgency.

**Mr Thompson**—We can provide that advice to you on notice.

**Answer:**

In line with Government requirements, the Department will be working toward having all correctly submitted invoices paid within 30 days.

Around 50 per cent of invoices received by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) have been incorrect or incomplete when first submitted, creating delays in payment. This figure, while still too high, is an improvement on earlier figures indicating around 70 per cent of invoices were incorrect or incomplete when first submitted. The 30-day timeframe for payment applies from the date at which a complete and correct invoice is received.

To address the problems with invoicing, DEWHA developed a template for assessors to use, along with a step-by-step guide to filling in the template.

Departmental staff have also been contacting assessors directly if they have submitted an incorrect invoice to explain what needs to be fixed.