

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

**Topic: Solar Schools – Grants**

**Question reference number: CC73**

**Type of Question: Hansard ECA page 112, 9 February 2010**

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

**Number of Pages: 2**

**Question:** (Senator Troeth)

**Senator TROETH**—I would like to know the number of grants for solar and other renewable power systems and the total cost; the number of grants for solar hot water systems and the total cost; the number of grants for rainwater tanks and the total cost; the number of grants for ‘a range of energy efficiency measures’ and the total cost? If I could have those in due course that would be appreciated.

**Mr Thompson**—Yes, we can take it on notice.

**Senator TROETH**—How many schools simply registered for the \$50,000 rebate?

**Mr Thompson**—Since the program commenced on 1 July and up to the point where the program was suspended in October, more than 5,200 schools have registered to participate in the program.

**Senator TROETH**—Thank you. Also, included in those questions on notice: what feedback has the government received from schools, and also the solar industry, in terms of complaints?

**Mr Thompson**—We can take that on notice.

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**Senator TROETH**—Thank you. Also, included in those questions on notice: what feedback has the government received from schools, and also the solar industry, in terms of complaints?

**Mr Thompson**—We can take that on notice.

**Answer:**

1. Details of the number and the total cost of solar power systems, other renewable power systems, solar hot water systems, and other energy efficiency measures approved for the 1,366 grants paid to individual schools as of 23 May 2010 are provided below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Number of Schools Installing the Item*</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Solar Power System	1306	\$61.1 million
Other Renewable Power System	11	\$0.1 million
Solar Hot Water System	91	\$1.1 million
Rain Water Tank	260	\$4.8 million
Other Energy Efficiency Measures	434	\$6.0 million

**\*Note:** A school may install more than one of the listed items with its National Solar Schools grant.

Final details and costs of items being installed in a further 1,128 schools, whose grants are being paid under cooperative funding agreements with the states, will be provided by each of the relevant state agencies as part of their final reporting and financial acquittal obligations under the funding agreements. For most of these 1,128 schools, these details are not required until after 30 June 2010.

However, details are included for 13 Queensland government schools that completed installation of solar power systems under an initial trial cooperative funding agreement, completed well before cooperative agreements for the remainder of the 1,128 schools were put in place.

2. Some schools and installers have expressed concern about the time it can take to finalise claims with minor errors that have been returned to schools for revision. Following discussions with schools and installers, the Department has streamlined the manner in which these claims are assessed and revised. This has improved the approval time for individual schools by up to four weeks.

In addition, some government schools and installers have expressed concern about the longer timeframe for receipt of payments that are made under the new Federal Financial Relations Framework.