

**The Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts  
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Parliament House  
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## **Submission for Save our Solar (Solar Rebate Protection) Bill 2008 [No. 2]**

### **Issues to be addressed**

- **Eligibility requirements for financial assistance for the installation of solar hot water heaters**
- **Criteria for allocation of Renewable Energy Certificates to solar hot water heaters**
- **Impact of these requirements on potential emission reductions by environmentally responsible people on limited incomes**

### **Background**

In January 2008 we installed two solar hot water systems, one on each of our homes. We chose to install an evacuated tube solar hot water system from *Ultra Greensun*, based on its efficiency (see *Attachment 1: Ultra Greensun@bigpond.com*) and its purchase price of \$2,000 (installed). This particular heater is retro-fitted to an existing electric hot water cylinder.

**Advantages of the *Ultra Greensun* solar hot water system include (see *Attachment 2: Letter to Office of Renewable Energy Regulator re Solar Water Heater Financial Assistance* for more detail):**

- **Evacuated tube technology, which is more efficient than flat-plate solar systems (see [www.enviro-friendly.com](http://www.enviro-friendly.com))**
- **Attractive price compared to other manufacturers/suppliers e.g. 10 tube *Hills Endless Solar* system (160L) \$3,435**
- **Replacement of existing hot water cylinder not required, thus reducing wastage of resources**
- **Ease of installation for home owners, requiring minimal services of an electrician**
- **Reduced roof loading so that roof modifications are not required e.g. *Solarhart* systems weigh 206-776 kg when water tank is full**
- **Minimal use required of a secondary power source (electric boost), evidenced by measurable reductions in our power consumption.**

**Subsequently we have learned that:**

- (a) our choice of heater is not eligible for the Solar Hot Water Rebate**
- (b) the heater does not have a Renewable Energy Certificate value.**

**A letter from the Office of the Renewable Energy Regulator (see *Attachment 3: Letter to Ms Melanie Roberts*) in response to our submission in March explains that:**

- To be eligible for a rebate a hot water system must replace an existing electric storage hot water system, be eligible for at least 20 RECs and be installed by a suitably qualified person**
- To be eligible for RECs a solar hot water heater installation must be a complete system and cannot be based around a previously installed component (known as a retro-fit).**

## **Conclusion**

**In order that all Australians are able to contribute in some way to the reduction of carbon emissions through the use of solar hot water, we feel that the following issues need to be addressed:**

- Eligibility for financial assistance through the Solar Hot Water Rebate Program should be reviewed i.e. the efficiency of retro-fit systems should be measured and acknowledged**
- Criteria used to allocate Renewable Energy Certificate value to solar hot water systems should be reviewed. E.g. why does a 10 tube, electric boosted *Hills Endless Solar* complete system attract 11 RECs, while the 18 tube *Ultra Greensun* retro-fit system attracts none?**
- Incentives need to be provided so that all Australians, irrespective of income or circumstances, are encouraged to install a solar hot water system on every dwelling in the country.**

**Melanie Roberts**

**Ken Philpott**