

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
References Committee
Inquiry into the Green Loans Program
Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Portfolio
Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Answers to questions on notice
June 2010

Question No: 1
Topic: Assessor Certification
Hansard Page ECA: 82

Senator Milne asked: Just in relation to this certificate for training, given what you have said about wanting to get people out and the training was not up to certificate IV, as you are aware I have provided an email before from Stephen Berry promising the assessors that the government would fund an upgrade in their training to certificate IV. That was taken in good faith by assessors. Can you tell me when or if a decision was made by the department or the government not to honour that and what action has been taken in relation to a promise made by a departmental officer that was out of line or unacceptable or subsequently rejected; however you wish to put it?

Mr Thompson—To the best of my knowledge—and I think we again traversed similar ground in February in the Senate estimates hearings—that was never government policy and so there has never been a position that the Australian government would pay for an upgrade of training to cert IV for assessors.

Senator MILNE—If there was no government policy to that effect, but a departmental officer made that promise to assessors and that was certainly a view held by assessors, what action has been taken with regard to the officer who made those undertakings that he had no authority to make?

Mr Thompson—That goes to an internal staffing matter which I am not prepared to talk about in public hearings. I would be happy to make some brief comments in camera if that was seen as suitable by the committee.

Answer:

The Department's response to the Hawke report on the Home Insulation Program and the Faulkner Inquiry into the Green Loans Program, released on 3 July 2010, indicates that action is currently underway to investigate potential breaches identified in the Faulkner report.

The Department will conduct any necessary investigations to follow up actions where further potential breaches of the APS Code of Conduct, the Financial Management and Accountability Act and the Criminal Code are identified.