

Senate Inquiry Green Loans

In September last year I saw a very small advertisement in our local paper for Home Sustainability Course. Something in the advertisement held my attention and I eventually called the number. The details of the course were of interest to me but I thought that I wouldn't meet the selection criteria. Too easy it turned out to be. If I could tell the difference between different building materials I passed the selection criteria. Too easy and too good to be true. I could complete a Home Sustainability Course for \$1300 and after paying for registration and PI cover I could earn \$200 per household assessed. I'd only have to complete 15 assessments and I'd recoup my investment and then it was all profit.

As a mum of 2 small children it was the perfect job. I could work as much or as little as I wanted around the kids' kindergarten and preschool hours. I was excited to be embarking on a new career path as I was going to continue my education in this area and indulge a passion.

To date I have a HOM number and identity card from ABSA but remain in limbo as DEWHA has not ratified me into their system. I also have a number of disappointed friends and neighbours who wish to reduce their consumption of energy and water.

While not being able to embark as a Home Sustainability Assessor the experiences I have had to date have lead me to the following assessment of the HSAS:

A beneficial scheme for improving environmental behaviour

Implemented too quickly so that the assessment is not comprehensive enough. Seems that the Department thinks all houses are the same.

Should tie in with local council and state government environmental initiatives and teach householders how to recycle properly, set up a compost bin, protect storm water run off from householder contamination, water saving shower heads and enviro light bulbs etc. Too easy for the assessor to cut corners and complete a basic assessment rather than a comprehensive audit.

Too few barriers to entry or in other words too many commercial gains to be spun once the assessment was completed. Incomprehensible that the government does not see a conflict of interest in allowing the assessor to follow up the householder with private green offers and other revenue raising incentives 10 days after the completion of the assessment. (One of the reasons for a flood of assessors)

Lack of government marketing support for the scheme.

The Government has also failed all solo Home Assessors by failing to disclose the preferential assess one private company had to the bookings system. This completely corrupted the system and made a mockery of the government's stimulus intentions. How can you compete in an unlevel playfield when one company is going through the back door gobbling up all the bookings and the remainder are queuing at the door? Effectively the government has robbed all assessors of their investment and more if probable earnings are considered, effectively making us all unemployed. Very contrary to the

economic stimulus ethos – a dud in fact! To me this is the greatest failing of the scheme and amounts to unconscionable behaviour. And the greatest contributor to the scheme's rapid demise.

I wish for the opportunity to, at least, retrieve my investment which has had a significant impact on our family's financial position.

I would welcome the return of a greatly improved Home Sustainability Assessment Scheme and only hope if the scheme returns that the foibles to date have not done irretrievable damage in the community's mind. Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.