

To the Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

RE: Green Loans Program

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this enquiry.
I graduated from University with a Business Degree, majoring in Marketing. Before completing a course to become an assessor I had no prior experience in the building industry.

I completed my Green Loans training through Green Skills in Western Australia. The course I completed required me to complete the nationally accredited Home Sustainability Assessment short course in combination with the Professional Home Sustainability Assessment course (which was the required training course to qualify for the Green Loans programme). The whole training package was run over 7 days.

I chose to complete the Green Skills course because the other courses only required me to complete the three day Professional Home Sustainability Assessment training (Green Loans training). It was apparent to me that three days of training would be completely insufficient to equip someone, with no building assessment experience, with the skills to conduct a proper assessment.

For the record I would like to note that outside of my university degree Green Skills is the best training provider that I have ever worked with. I do not believe you will find a more committed, experienced, knowledgeable or passionate training provider in the country. Furthermore if every training provider operated with the same level of integrity as Green Skills does this programme would have been a huge success.

This programme has been an abject failure because of:

The totally insufficient requirements of the training which made it easy for just about anyone to become a “qualified assessor”.

The rise of opportunist training providers pushing through assessors en mass which led to an oversupply of assessors.

The instances of business’ spruiking their products under the guise of assessments.

The instances of business’ using call centres to find work for subcontracted assessors.

The very poor implementation and running of the programme by ABSA and DEWHA.

Communication channels with both organisations was terrible and the online booking system never got up and running.

I personally know an assessor who had no industry experience, he completed a three day course, signed up with a company who uses a call centre to drum up work for him, they take a \$50 cut off each of his assessments and he literally counts sockets in people’s homes. He is in and out in under an hour, guesses what’s in their bathrooms because he doesn’t like going in there and is unable to offer any advice about sustainable behavioural change, or passive solar design principles for future home improvements – because he doesn’t know what those things are! He thinks it’s the easiest \$200 you can make.

My major concern with this programme is:

The opportunistic third parties businesses/training providers out to make a quick dollar off the government.

Very poor levels of training required to qualify to become an assessor.

A complete lack of Quality control

A lack of any body enforcing the rules of the assessors and the training providers.

Poor implementation and running of the programme.

If the programme continues I would like to see:

A much higher standard of training to qualify to become an assessor.

A quick survey given to each householder post assessment regarding how they think the assessor performed. And a monitoring of this feedback to weed out shonky “in and out socket counting assessors” or those requiring further training.

Banning of call centres.

A limit on the number of assessors.

Identification and prosecution of businesses who used the Green Loans programme to sell their own products.