

30 March 2010

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in response to the email that was sent to ABSA members dated 24 March 2010 regarding ABSA Presentation to Minister Wong and how to submit to a senate enquiry.

I was working full time for a company for 11 years when I was approached by Green Energy Australia to undertake doing home assessments. I paid to do the training and also paid for a new computer and equipment to undertake doing home assessments. This was going to work in my favour as I have 2 small children, one which started primary school this year so this was going to work around school hours. As I was eagerly awaiting some kind of reply from ABSA I was finding out a colleague had already received there member no and was awaiting to get their contract. I was rather irate with this as I had already been waiting for 2 months to hear whether I would be contracted or not and so not receiving any employment or financial aid. After repeated phone calls and emails, and an email to CEO Alison Carmichael I was told that my paperwork had been mislaid and they would do something about ASAP. After another couple of weeks with still no reply and after lots of calls and emails I was emailed my HO number and then with a following email that the cutoff date for contracts had arrived. I was very very mad at this as this was a mistake made by ABSA and therefore taken out of my hands. I sent off the contract anyway hoping that their mistake could be rectified and I would be accredited with a contract. I have made many phone calls and countless emails in regards to this matter in the hope that my voice was heard and still to this day no one has returned my call or one of my many emails. I understand that there is a lot of pressure on Green Loans and the many employees taking my calls but a little common courtesy would have been appreciated.

The changes to this scheme affected myself, my family, my employment a great deal. I resigned from a job that gave me security and financial being to become an assessor with the knowledge that doing this would be more beneficial to me financial and more rewarding to my family as the assessments would easily fit in with my children and home life. I became an assessor to be a better person for my family, to see more of my family and to have a better home life. Not being contracted as yet has resulted in me being put on temporary employment with Green Energy Australia and working on a day by day basis with them and putting financial strain and stress on myself and my family. I solely did not take this position for the financial benefits of this but to have a better home life with my family.

I believe what you have outlined in regards to changes to the scheme with reference to new contracts to be a good step forward. I feel that this will give a good indication as to who is in this for the long haul or who saw it as a quick money scheme. I also would encourage any compensation for small businesses to set themselves up to do this be compensated as in regards to the influx of assessors, who was to know that this would be a great opportunity for small businesses, families and the like. Anything to do with sustainability, energy efficiency, carbon footprints and the environment is surely to be a good thing for this country and so to run it as inefficiently as it has been has been a poor move on the government for not monitoring this more carefully.

Many people I have spoken with in regard to Green Loans have been positive about this program and have been readily available for me to assess their home. I have done a couple of homes (practice reasons in readiness to start) and people are very eager to do what they can to make their home more energy efficient. Most were inclined to apply for the loan as well to either install Solar Array, insulation, Hot Water Service, energy efficient appliances etc. A lot of people have been disappointed by this especially with the Solar Array. I am not sure that people fully realized how efficient this was going to be and then after many adverts and word of mouth people were greatly appreciative of this product but were not fully given the chance to explore this as the rebate cutoff date was brought forward rather abruptly because it was too successful and I feel the same has been given in regards to the Green Loans program. Anything involved in environmental change, especially in this day and age and with Prime Minister Rudd's proposal to lower our carbon footprint would definitely be a success.

In regards to revitalizing the scheme, everything you have outlined has been positive and people like myself should be heard and should be given the chance to promote this awareness and I feel a screening process should be implemented to select the new contractors to work out who is in this program for the real reasons. I would also recommended a more personal approach in regards to complaints as my response so far has been zilch, which has left me feeling despondent and not sure of my future and my family.

I hope that my letter is taken into consideration and would appreciate a response to this. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Nicole Kelly