

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
PO Box 6100
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

14 April 2010

Dear Committee Secretary,

SUBMISSION ON THE GREEN LOANS INQUIRY

The Electrical Trades Union, Victorian Branch (ETU) currently represents approximately 17,700 members. Unlike the union movement generally, our membership has consistently increased from approximately 7000 in 1995. This membership growth is an indication of the high regard in which the ETU is held by workers in our industry. It is a reflection of the fact that the ETU is a progressive organization which has successfully looked after the interests of its members.

ETU members are employed in an array of industries. Some members work in carbon intensive industries such as petro-chemical, others in renewables. Looking after the interests of our members includes being aware of the changing landscape of employment opportunities, trends and policies.

With respect to the Green Loans Program, the ETU supports the intent of the program in that it was designed to provide a financial incentive for householders to undertake energy and water saving measures within their home. The program's design however did not directly tie spending with carbon emission reductions; this is a major failing.

The ETU supports the Green Loan program being redesigned. With this particular attention need to be given to:

- Providing a program which in time can be self sustaining, thereby preventing the boom and bust cycles that have recently occurred within the government's environment portfolio;
- Be simple to understand thereby maximising community confidence and participation;
- Have quality control measures put in place for both the training and assessment components;
- Ensuring all government spending results in the provision of education and actual carbon reductions;

ELECTRICAL TRADES UNION OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIAN BRANCH

Communications, Electrical,
Electronic, Energy, Information,
Postal, Plumbing and Allied
Services Union of Australia

President

John Doran

Secretary

Dean Mighell

Assistant Secretaries

Howard Worthing

Troy Gray

Email etu@etu.asn.au

Web www.etu.asn.au

Melbourne

Level 1

200 Arden St

North Melbourne, VIC 3051

Ph 03 8329 0000

Fax 03 8329 0066

Postal Address

PO Box 432

North Melbourne, VIC 3051

Geelong

67 Gheringhap St

Geelong, VIC 3221

Ph 03 5229 3344

Fax 03 5229 3515

Morwell

42 Buckley St

Morwell, VIC 3840

Ph 03 5134 3847

Fax 03 5133 9238

- Excluding the participation of organisations, particularly of a larger size that have already received favourable treatment; and
- Banning cold calls and door knocking measures that have been used by some companies to sign up home assessments.

Nurturing the growing 'green' market requires supporting measures such as consistent and simple programs that engage the community. It is essential that all programs that the Government delivers is coupled with recognised training and skill requirements. In addition consistency must be given to provide financial and employment certainty for investing businesses and workers.

I look forward to the constructive redesigning of the Green Loans program.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Mighell
Secretary ETU, Victorian Branch

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