

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Senate Estimates

2 June 2009

Question: **BR-26**

Topic: Solar thermal and photovoltaic projects

Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Williams asked:

The Government is likely to include solar thermal and photovoltaic projects as part of its new initiatives. What is being done to overcome these barriers to uptake by storing as heat, gases or electricity?

Answer:

The Government recognises the intermittent nature of solar power presents electricity network management challenges and has provided funding to reduce barriers to its increased uptake.

The Government has recently announced the \$1.5 billion *Solar Flagships Program* to create an additional 1,000 megawatts of solar generation capacity to help position Australia as a world leader in solar technology. The Program is expected to comprise up to 4 solar power stations – 2 photovoltaic and 2 solar thermal technology based, with energy storage to be a part of the projects developed. This model is subject to market testing.

Solar Flagships will be complemented by the *Australian Centre for Renewable Energy*, which will administer \$465 million in programs designed to promote the development, commercialisation and deployment of renewable technologies using a commercial investment approach.

The Government has also provided \$100 million to establish the *Australian Solar Institute*, which is anticipated to support the development of energy storage technologies suitable for use with solar energy systems, including both photovoltaic and solar thermal systems.

Finally, work is well underway to progress the \$20.4 million *Advanced Electricity Storage Technologies* program, which is supporting the development and demonstration of efficient electricity storage technologies for use with variable renewable generation sources like solar.