

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2011-12
30 May 2011

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

TOPIC: Origin Solar

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Birmingham

QUESTION No.: BI-71

1. What payments have been made since 2007-08 to Origin Solar related to development of its 'SLIVER' photovoltaic technology? When were these payments made?
2. Are reports that Origin Solar has since 2005 received \$2 million from a state-federal structural adjustment fund, \$1 million from the Australian Greenhouse Office and \$5 million from an AusIndustry renewable energy development initiative correct?
3. (a) Is the Department aware of Origin Solar's planned and/or announced relocation to Idaho?
(b) Was there any requirement in grants towards Origin Solar's operations for Origin Solar to remain in Australia and/or South Australia? If yes, please detail these requirements. If no, why not?
(c) Is there any capacity for taxpayers to recoup funds provided to Origin Solar?

ANSWER

1. Australian Government payments under the Structural Adjustment Fund for South Australia:

20/08/2007	\$853,000 (GST exclusive)
09/11/2007	\$121,902 (GST exclusive)

Australian Government payments under the Renewable Energy Development Initiative:

13/09/2007	\$526,041 (GST exclusive)
13/12/2007	\$676,339 (GST exclusive)
07/04/2008	\$156,386 (GST exclusive)
19/05/2009	\$250,000 (GST exclusive)

2. Yes, Structural Adjustment Fund for South Australia: \$2 million (GST exclusive) [Australian Government component \$1,756,100 (GST exclusive)].

No, Renewable Energy Commercialisation Program: \$50,000 (GST exclusive). A grant of \$1 million (GST exclusive) was awarded to Origin Energy in 2003 under the Renewable Energy Commercialisation Program administered by the Australian Greenhouse Office. \$950,000 (GST exclusive) was paid prior to 2005; \$50,000 (GST exclusive) was paid since 2005. This advice has been provided by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

Yes, Renewable Energy Development Initiative: \$5 million (GST exclusive).

3. (a) Yes.
- (b) The Renewable Energy Development Initiative grant was provided for development of the 'Sliver' technology and its initial commercialisation in Australia. The Structural Adjustment Fund for South Australia grant assisted in establishing manufacturing capability in Australia.
- (c) Structural Adjustment Fund for South Australia: Funding clawback provisions applied during the term of the grant agreement. The agreement has expired. No capacity now exists to recoup funds.

Renewable Energy Development Initiative: Funding clawback provisions applied during the term of the grant agreement. However, this capacity has now expired.