

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**  
**Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2010**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Topic: Carbon Offset Programs**

**Question reference number: CC29**

**Type of Question: Written**

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010**

**Number of Pages: 1**

**Question:** (Senator Birmingham)

- a) What carbon offset programs are operating within the Rudd Government?
- b) What support is given by the Government to private companies utilising carbon offset programs?
- c) What is the Government doing to regulate and control carbon offset programs?

**Answer:**

- a) The Australian Government has administered the Greenhouse Friendly™ initiative since 2001. The initiative provides certification for carbon neutral products and services and approves abatement credits for sale on the voluntary market, including to Greenhouse Friendly™ certified product and service providers. Greenhouse Friendly™ will continue until 1 July 2010 when it will be replaced by the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS).
- b) The Government certifies carbon neutral products and services and approved abatement credits for sale in the voluntary market through the Greenhouse Friendly™ initiative. Under the NCOS, private companies will be able to continue to offer carbon neutral products and services and the NCOS will facilitate a voluntary carbon market.

Under the NCOS, Australian businesses will have confidence that offset credits developed and eligible under the NCOS will achieve emissions reductions beyond Australia's targets.

- c) The Government released the NCOS on 24 November 2009 to provide national consistency and consumer confidence in the voluntary carbon market. The NCOS provides guidance on what constitutes a genuine, additional voluntary offset, sets minimum requirements for the verification and retirement of voluntary carbon credits and provides guidance for calculating the carbon footprint of an organisation or product for the purpose of achieving carbon neutrality.