

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

**Topic: Green Loans – Assessors Cold Calling**

**Question reference number: CC62**

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**Question:** (Senator Milne)

**Senator MILNE**—But apart from the Do Not Call Register, cold calling and canvassing is okay?

**Mr Thompson**—That is our understanding.

**Senator MILNE**—In the newsletter from DEWHA to assessors in September 2009 it was reiterated that home assessors are forbidden from cold calling and canvassing for households to sign up for an assessment, so how do you explain that?

**Ms Mackie**—I stand corrected on that.

**Senator MILNE**—I would like that clarified because Fieldforce has advertised call centres for cold calling and other assessors are being told they cannot do it. On this exact same issue of what is allowed and what is not allowed, the assessors are told that they cannot promote anybody else's products, et cetera, and yet Fieldforce gives bonuses for promoting their product. Now is that prohibited or not for an assessor?

**Mr Thompson**—Clearly we stand corrected on that previous advice, so we are going to have to get some clarification on that.

**Answer:**

'Cold calling' is not prohibited under the current Terms and Conditions of the Assessor Contract. However, the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and more recently the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency have always discouraged the activity of 'cold calling' as part of the Green Loans Program, particularly in regards to privacy concerns and numbers listed on the 'Do Not Call Register'.

Breaches relating to the 'Do Not Call Register' are investigated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA); the Department provides any necessary information to assist ACMA with its investigations.

In regards to promoting a brand, product or company, the Assessor Code of Professional Practice clearly states that assessors must not promote or direct households to products when conducting a Home Sustainability Assessment:

6.6.3 Assessors must act impartially at all times. When conducting a Home Sustainability Assessment they must not (unless otherwise approved by the National Administrator in writing):

- a) communicate commercial product or service branding, or
- b) direct Households towards a product range developed or supported by an enterprise with which the Assessor is associated or from whom the Assessor receives a commission or other benefit.

These requirements are also set out in the terms and conditions of assessor contracts. The contracts specify that the Assessor must not, at the time of conducting the Assessment, undertake any additional services on its own behalf or on behalf of or for any person, that do not form part of the Services, unless those additional services have been approved in writing by the Department.