

Amended Submission to the "Save Our Solar" Senate Inquiry (7 August 2008)

Dear Sir/Madam

As a professional, with renewable energy training, working in the greenhouse abatement area I am in daily contact with the community and professionals who are dismayed at the Government's decision to means test the Solar Rebate for households. My contacts in the solar PV industry are reporting significant fall in sales and requests for quotation. This is backed up by my conversations with friends and the general community through the council.

In my work at Southern Metropolitan Regional Council we have researched greenhouse abatement actions in the home. We identified 7 energy actions that could make a significant impact on greenhouse emissions from external shading of windows, ceiling insulation to solar hot water and renewable energy. In 2007 under the project, **Energy Actions**, households were individually approached to participate. Over 60% of the community chose to participate and the action of greatest interest was on home renewable energy, with over 80% selected information on it. Followup phonecalls with households have found this great enthusiasm for renewable energy has been significantly dampened by the rebate change.

Whilst it is a good idea to means test the rebate, I feel that the cutoff income at \$100,000 is far too low, and is inconsistent with other means tested grants/rebates. The government has set an ambitious target to increase renewable energy in Australia, encouraging community involvement is one way to help us meet that target.

Residential PV also:

- Increases distributed electricity generation, therefore delaying the necessity for increased spending on current infrastructure
- Lightens peak load on the grid especially during the summer peak periods – fewer blackouts due to grid overload
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions – is a clean technology and reduces the need for fossil fuel electricity generation
- Improves awareness of renewable energy in the community which will in turn increase the acceptance and uptake of other technologies
- Encourages innovation as demand for renewables grow with community awareness
- Has economic and environmental benefits through creation of jobs in a clean technology industry

Australians are ready to take on the challenge, the Government must lend its support to make it happen.

Yours faithfully

Winnie Killick
Green Enterprise Facilitator
Southern Metropolitan Regional Council