

Att; Senator Simon Birmingham

Re; Mean testing of the Solar Grid connect system (Solar Rebate Protection) bill
2008 (No 2)

Dear Simon,

We are a small Electrical/Solar company here in Perth carrying out the Supply,
Design & Installation of Solar Grid connected systems onto properties around WA.

I believe we were one of the first few in Australia to install a Photovoltaic Grid
Connected system at our own place here in Henley Brook back in 2000,
which received the then grant of \$8,250.00

Over that time we have supplied & installed a number of systems, It has been a slow
start and a hard sell. Then we get hit by the drop in the rebate! down to \$4,000.0 a few
years back.

The rebate was then increased to \$8,000.00 this was a great kick start, one that the
industry needed. The phones started ringing & systems got sold. (great while it
lasted).

Approx ratio of systems that we have installed up until one and a half years
ago, would be the following, approx 40% of clientele under \$100,000.00 & 60% of
clientele over \$100,000.00 (family income), but It has been noted, with the increase of
interest rates over the last year, that the ratio has changed to approx 20% below
\$100,000.00 & 80% over \$100,000.00.

Then after the budget, with the \$8,000.00 being means tested coming in for clientele
with family income over \$100,000.00 the bottom fell out of the high income market.
This was a pity because we were getting a lot of enquiries from future
customers within the mining industries etc, that felt they needed to do right by the
environment & were looking at installing Solar Grid connect systems. Needless to say
this sentiment was lost as soon as the rebate became means tested on this scale.

Impact on our company,

We have invested heavily in the industry in the forms of plant, vehicle & equipment,
on the understanding that the rebate was going to be around for some time, with the
new government pre election promises & view on the environment etc.

We also employ apprentices with one coming out of his apprenticeship in January 2009
& I was going to employ another early next year. However this is now on hold due the
government implementing the means testing making the future of solar gridfeed
systems very bleak!

I feel very sad as I have a love of the industry that I am in and enjoy passing this
knowledge on to the younger generation. I find great satisfaction in helping to provide
a new way of sustainable and environmentally sound thinking to future operators in
the electrical industry, but these changes have made that task all the more difficult.

The Future

I don't have a problem with means testing, but not at such a low level of family income.

I think the threshold needs to be increased up to at least \$150,000.00 with a sliding scale after that

I am more than keen to be present at a public forum on this matter

Kind Regards

Brian Jones
Switched-On Electrical/Solar