



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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INCREASED FUNDING FOR SOLAR REBATES IN 2008-09

The Rudd Labor Government will bring forward \$25.6 million in funding under the Solar Homes and Communities Plan in 2008-09, and introduce a means test to make the program more equitable, Minister for the Environment, Peter Garrett, said today.

“There has been a substantial increase in solar power installations across the country, so the Government has increased the funding available for rebates in 2008-09.”

Mr Garrett said as part of the changes to the scheme a new means test would be introduced, to ensure that the rebates of up to \$8,000 get to households that need them most to pay for installing solar power systems.

“From midnight tonight, access to rebates will be restricted to households with an annual taxable income of less than \$100,000, bringing the program into alignment with the Solar Hot Water Rebate which also has a means test of \$100,000.

“The government’s investment in solar power is responsible and fair, making sure funding is directed to households who struggle with the upfront costs of solar power panels.

“Renewable Energy Certificates generated by solar power systems will also continue to reduce the up front cost of installing solar PV panels,” Mr Garrett said.

“From 2009, Australian households will also have access to \$10,000 Green Loans which will help 200,000 families with the upfront costs to improve the energy and water efficiency of their homes, including through installing solar power systems.

“As well as the Solar Homes and Communities Plan the government is boosting the solar power industry by making every Australian school a solar school.

“The National Solar Schools Program will provide up to \$50,000 to more than 9,000 Australian schools to install solar power systems and other measures to improve energy and water efficiency,” Mr Garrett said.

“The Tackling Climate Change - Renewable Remote Power Generation Program also continues to provide valuable support for the solar power sector by providing up to 50 per cent of the cost of installing solar power systems for people who are not connected to a mains electricity supply.”