

SYNERGY — BILLING ERROR COMPLAINTS

2636. Mr C.J. Tallentire to the Minister representing the Minister for Energy

- (1) How many complaints about billing errors has Synergy received in the last six months?
- (2) How many of these complaints relate to bills being higher than a customer's average bill?
- (3) How many of these complaints relate to errors in meter reading?
- (4) How many of these complaints relate to an under-payment for renewable energy generated by householders?
- (5) When customers have challenged a bill, is Synergy threatening to disconnect?
- (6) How many customers have been threatened with disconnection in the last six months?
- (7) How many customers have been disconnected in the last six months?

Mr W.R. MARMION replied:

Please note that this information is current as at 30 April 2010.

- (1) 1,727.
- (2) 500.
- (3) While meter readings are the responsibility of Western Power, Synergy receives complaints associated with meter readings given the bills issued by Synergy are based on these meter readings.
Synergy has received 524 complaints relating to errors in meter readings.
- (4) Synergy has received 68 complaints relating to payments for renewable energy generated by householders. Some complaints related to a requirement for customers on the Renewable Energy Buyback Scheme needing to be over \$100 in credit over six consecutive months before a refund payment would be made. Synergy will now accept requests for payment from customers if the total credit on their bill is more than \$100 at any given time, upon written request.
Other complaints related to incidents where a customer believed they have been underpaid, based on their expectations of the generation capabilities of their photo-voltaic system, when in fact Synergy has correctly paid the customer.
- (5) Synergy does not threaten disconnection if a customer challenges a bill. The Code of Conduct for the Supply of Electricity to Small Use Customers prohibits Synergy from disconnecting a customer where a complaint about any matter is pending.
- (6) 16,405 final warning cards for non-payment have been issued. This number does not represent actual customers, but the total number of warnings including multiple warnings being issued to a single customer.
- (7) 2,207.