

PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER SYSTEM - REBATE

**268. Hon KEN BASTON to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Energy:**

I refer to the dropping of the five per cent Sustainable Energy Development Office rebate for photovoltaic power systems.

- (1) Will the minister explain the apparent anomaly between the supposed commitment of this government and Horizon Power to renewable energy and sustainability and the dropping of the renewable energy rebate?
- (2) What was the funding commitment of the state government to this program?
- (3) Does the minister have any plans to introduce a rebate that is targeted at remote areas, Aboriginal communities and pastoral stations; and, if not, why not?

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

I thank Hon Ken Baston for providing some notice of the question.

- (1) Over 2005-06 and 2006-07, the government spent more than \$8 million supporting renewable energy through the Solar Schools program, solar water heater subsidies and renewable energy subsidy production programs, and direct investment in renewable energy systems. The government has also committed funds to other initiatives, such as the Kalgoorlie Sun Farm project, the urban demonstration project and government purchases of green power. Additional funds have been invested through the state government's electricity corporations to install wind turbines in places including Esperance, Hopetoun, Rottnest Island, Bremer Bay, Coral Bay and Denham, and on other major initiatives such as the Narrogin Integrated Wood Processing Demonstration Plant. There is no anomaly between the state government's commitment to renewable energy and the amount of funding it contributes to renewable energy and the initiatives it has introduced to support renewable energy.
- (2) The funding commitment was \$500 000 a year from 2000-01 to 2003-04. The funding was carried forward such that all funding could be used to support renewable energy systems in remote areas of the state.
- (3) No. People in remote areas can still obtain a rebate of 50 per cent of the cost of renewable energy systems, which is cost effective for them and which brings WA into line with the other states. With a 50 per cent rebate, pastoral stations, small Aboriginal communities, small tourist operations and individual homes that operate their own power systems to provide an electricity supply typically obtain quite a satisfactory return on their investment in a renewable energy system. There are many options for the government to support renewable energy and it must consider the outcomes that can be achieved from the different options, and the relative cost of those options.