

RENEWABLE ENERGY BUYBACK SCHEME

3775. Hon Matt Benson-Lidholm to the Minister for Energy

I refer to the Renewable Energy Buyback Scheme, and I ask —

- (1) How many non-commercial alternative energy generating systems, with a capacity greater than 5 kW, are currently connected to the electricity grid?
- (2) Of the systems listed in (1),
  - (a) do they currently receive any payment or any form of power consumption offsetting allowance for the energy that is supplied in excess of domestic requirements that is fed back into the electricity grid;
  - (b) what is the combined potential capacity provided to the grid, and what was the amount of power generated and supplied into the electricity grid in the last 12 months and how is it measured;
  - (c) what was the domestic market value of the power generated in the last 12 months, and to which agency does this benefit accrue; and
  - (d) has there been any estimation of the overall supply or capital costs that have been incurred or avoided due to the contribution of these systems and if so, what are they?
- (3) Can you confirm that in order to have a non-commercial alternative energy generating system larger than 5 kW system connected to the electricity grid, both the control equipment and installation must be accredited and approved by Western Power and Synergy as meeting their required standards?
- (4) Have there been any instances where problems with system instability can be attributed to the operation of such systems and if so, how many?
- (5) What is the evidence that they are the cause of the problem?
- (6) What are the direct costs involved to affected utilities from systems instability having been positively identified as caused by alternative energy generating systems?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

- (1) Within the South West Interconnected System (SWIS), Western Power has approved 487 non commercial systems with a capacity between 5kW and 30kW.
- (2)
  - (a) Synergy does not offer access to the Renewable Energy Buyback Scheme (REBS) and Feed in Tariff to customers with systems larger than 5kW in capacity.
  - (b) 3743kW based on the combined capacity of inverter sizes that have been approved for installation. However, some installations may not have proceeded, and some may have an inverter with greater capacity than is required for the capacity of the solar panels installed.
  - (c) Synergy does not receive export data for customers who are ineligible for the REBS or Feed in Tariff and is therefore unable to determine the value of energy exported from those installations. Any generation that is not purchased under contract or sold to Synergy through a REBS contract would be to Synergy's benefit under the Notional Wholesale Meter arrangements of the Wholesale Electricity Market.
  - (d) Perth Solar City is undertaking studies on the impacts and benefits of solar photovoltaic systems on the network. As the studies have only recently commenced, results or findings are not yet available.
- (3) Western Power is required to assess all applications to connect systems in accordance with technical rules as administered by the ERA. If all requirements are met the system is approved.
- (4) There is no direct evidence at this time.
- (5)-(6) Not applicable.