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## Clarification of previous e-Bulletin #15: Selling a property with solar panels

The Department issued an e-Bulletin on this matter last year, following concerns that the advertising used by agents when selling properties with solar panels could potentially mislead buyers.

As part of the e-Bulletin, information about the Renewable Energy Buyback Scheme (REBS) offered by Synergy was included. Unfortunately, the advice in relation to transferring an energy contract was incorrect.

At the time of issuing the previous e-Bulletin, we stated that agents and sales representatives should be mindful that existing REBS contracts may not be transferred. However, we wish to advise that households that meet Synergy's or Horizon Power's REBS eligibility criteria may join REBS at any time, by completing the REBS application form, available from the Synergy or Horizon Power websites. The existing REBS contract does not need to be transferred from the former owner.

There is an additional renewable energy credit scheme, known as the Feed-in Tariff (FiT) scheme. It is important to note this scheme is suspended for new entrants. However, if the current electricity account holder for the property is already registered for the FiT scheme, the balance of the 10-year FiT contract can be transferred to the buyer (as the new electricity account holder), if the buyer meets the eligibility criteria AND completes the FiT section on the REBS application form when setting up their electricity account.

Eligibility criteria vary for these schemes. Further advice about these schemes can be sought by reading the terms and conditions available from the electricity providers' websites or by contacting the relevant electricity provider directly. General advice can also be sought from the Public Utilities Office.

Agents and sales representatives should be mindful about the enticements or statements they include in the advertising for a property in relation to the savings and/or advantages of solar panels, as credits may not be available to all new owners and consumption patterns may differ markedly.

The advertising should not include representations that may not apply to a new occupant. For example, stating that a buyer may save "hundreds or thousands" on their electricity bills may not hold true, as this will depend on the energy consumption patterns of the new occupants and the eligibility of the electricity account holder. As you would be aware, making false or misleading representations is an offence against the Australian Consumer Law.