



Speech by  
**Jeff Seeney**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

Hansard Wednesday, 25 November 2009

---

## **SOLAR HOT-WATER HEATERS**

**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (11.38 am): Anna Bligh's election promise of low-cost solar hot-water heaters for 200,000 Queensland homes—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr O'Brien): Order! The member will refer to the honourable member by her proper title.

**Mr SEENEY:** The Premier's election promise of low-cost solar hot-water heaters for 200,000 Queensland homes has become a farce. It has taken almost a year to install one unit at Windsor, according to the minister's most recent media statements.

Queensland householders were conned into believing that they would soon get low-cost solar units. Thousands have been left waiting, with no word from the government about what is happening and the scheme has turned into a bureaucratic and administrative nightmare. At the same time Queensland's solar companies, particularly smaller family-run firms, have seen their normal business levels plummet as many who have been contemplating solar pulled back to take up the Bligh government's promise. Labor's solar promise was always dodgy. It was poorly conceived and largely based on federal subsidies with no actual state budget funding allocated. All the warnings from the local industry were ignored and all we have heard is that one unit has been installed. Many longstanding solar companies were shocked at what was being proposed. In short, they said that there was no way the Bligh government could enter the market and set the price for solar hot-water heaters, because that is what the scheme attempted to do. The winning tendering company, Conergy Australia, is a subsidiary of a German company, but few in Queensland had even heard of its existence when it was awarded the tender.

This was a totally unfunded promise. It was all about the Premier's chances at the ballot box. The Queensland solar hot-water sector has been severely disrupted and a lot of Queenslanders who have been promised low-cost systems have been kept in the dark. People who applied for the solar hot-water scheme have in recent days been sent a letter outlining the processes that are involved in completing their application. It is a page and a half of bureaucratic gobbledegook, and I will table it for the benefit of the House. It means that anyone who is successful in eventually getting a solar hot-water system under this scheme must get a final receipt from the state government, apply to the federal government for a subsidy, return the subsidy to the state government or meet the costs themselves. I table the document for the benefit of members.

*Tabled paper:* Copy of a document, undated, from Greg Nielsen, Assistant Director-General, Office of Clean Energy, in relation to the Queensland Solar Hot Water Program [[1482](#)].

*(Time expired)*