

Media release

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Small businesses to suffer as solar rebate axed

Small businesses around Australia will suffer from the Federal Government cancelling the solar panel rebate 21 days earlier than promised.

Solar panel installers will bear the brunt of the rash decision to axe the \$8,000 rebate as applications to the scheme cannot be taken, leaving the sector without the expected flood of last minute orders.

Master Electricians national manager for workplace policy Paul Daly said the sector was promised a June 30 deadline and was not consulted about the changes.

“This hasty decision has completely disrupted the sector.

“These businesses have been planning for a rush of orders that would generate work well into next year – that can no longer happen,” Mr Daly said.

“If the Government expects small businesses to deliver services such as its Solar Rebate Scheme, it must in return provide the certainty that operators need for their planning, finance and staffing.”

The uncertainty felt by the sector extends into Australian households. The decisions to bring the deadline forward means Australian households are missing out on a great environmental initiative.

The Government’s proposed replacement Renewable Energy Target Scheme (RET Scheme) will be introduced into Parliament next week, leaving the industry doubtful of make-up orders being processed any time soon.

“This is another *alcopops* situation where the Government is pushing ahead with a new measure before receiving Parliamentary approval.

“Installers can have no confidence the RET Scheme will even be passed, and that they will receive any money for the contracts signed after today.

“The RET Scheme will not be passed in time to make up for the loss of income the sector is facing right now,” Mr Daly said.

A further loss of income is in the advertising businesses within the sector have booked and paid for up until June 30 to promote the last days of the Solar Rebate Scheme.

“Advertisements are on air today – is the Government going to reimburse these businesses that have spent large sums of money promoting its scheme?”

Four weeks ago the Government committed to the \$8,000 solar rebate in its budget and yesterday back-flipped without notice, consultation, or consideration of the industry this decision will affect most.

Paul Daly is available for interviews today

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