



## Renewable energy inquiry heats up

The government's \$435 million renewable energy grants program will come under scrutiny at a public hearing of parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit in Canberra on September 19.

The Renewable Energy Demonstration Program was launched in 2009 and awarded grants to partially fund the development of six projects for renewable energy technologies such as solar, geothermal and ocean energy.

The program was designed to accelerate the commercialisation and deployment of new renewable energy technologies by assisting their demonstration on a commercial scale.

In a recent report, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) said the department responsible for administering the program, the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, "did not manage key aspects of the program's implementation well".

It was the department's first major program, with an accelerated timeframe as part of the government's economic stimulus activities. The audit revealed particular weaknesses in program planning, probity arrangements and the assessment of applications. It recommended the department strengthen its processes for future grants programs.

Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, said the administration of grants programs was of continuing interest to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.

"Every year billions of dollars of public money is spent on grants programs," said Mr Oakeshott. "The committee is concerned with making sure this money is spent in a way that ensures the best value for money is achieved.

"Yet again, we are seeing a grants program that has been implemented without an adequate level of planning and without measures to ensure transparency and accountability."

Representatives from the ANAO and the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism will appear before the committee on **Wednesday, 19 September 2012** from **12:15 pm to 1 pm** in **Committee Room 2R1**, Parliament House, Canberra.

More information about the hearing can be found at the committee's website [www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa](http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa) under 'Current Inquiries – Review of Auditor-General's Reports'.

**The hearing will be broadcast live at:** <http://www.aph.gov.au/live>

**For media comment:** please contact Committee Chair, Rob Oakeshott MP, on (02) 6584 2911.

**For information about the hearing:** please contact the committee secretariat by telephone (02) 6277 4615, e-mail [jcpaa@aph.gov.au](mailto:jcpaa@aph.gov.au), or visit the committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/jcpaa>.