

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs. Finocchiaro to the Minister for Business and Innovation

First Home Buyer - \$10,000 Home Renovation Scheme**1. How many people have elected to take a \$2,000 upfront payment to purchase white goods as part of the Home Renovation Scheme?**

There have been 504 approved Home Renovation Grant applicants that have received Household Goods Grant payments.

2. When will this scheme be concluded?

Applications to the Home Renovation Grant close at 5pm on 30 September 2018. However, applicants will have up to six months from the date of issue of the vouchers to complete the works. Vouchers issued under the program can be redeemed by businesses until 30 June 2019.

3. How will success be measured?

Success will be measured through the number of applications received, and the total value of works and expenditure in the Territory that is achieved as a result of the program. This value will be derived through analysis of the type and values of works and household goods purchased with vouchers to determine the total estimated economic impact.

The program's impact will also be measured through comparative analysis of the annual number of first home buyers who have entered the market.

4. What program integrity safeguards are in place?

The design of the program employs a risk-based approach to determine the structure that would present the least risk and maintain a high level of integrity. The resultant integrity safeguards include:

- terms and conditions prepared by a legal professional to ensure integrity measures were built in and enforceable
- supporting frequently asked questions to assist applicants and businesses determine their eligibility and the approved works/purchases before applying
- confirmation of applicant eligibility as a First Home Buyer through the Department of Treasury and Finance
- requirement for supporting information to accompany First Home Buyer application including quotes (meeting specified criteria from terms and conditions) from a verified Territory business
- requirement for businesses to demonstrate their eligibility to supply works and be approved by the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation (DTBI)
- other than the Household Goods Grant, no money is provided directly to the first home buyer
- if Household Goods Grant monies have been provided in advance, these must be acquitted with receipts; in all other Household Goods Grant cases, payment is made based on eligible purchase receipts provided

- voucher(s) for the completion of approved works must be signed and handed to the business at the satisfactory completion of works
- businesses must apply to redeem the voucher and include a copy of the invoice(s), which is/are matched to the initial quotation(s) provided with the First Home Buyer's application
- declarations are required by both First Home Buyer applicants and participating businesses, and
- audits of businesses and applicants can be carried out up to 12 months after program has ended.

5. What policies has the Department in place to prevent fraud and misrepresentation?

In developing the program, DTBI considered fraud prevention and integrity measures as a singular issue. In addition to the measures detailed above, DTBI developed a risk register identifying fraud risks and as a result a number of fraud indicators were identified for continual review and monitoring by DTBI staff.

These include monitoring applications, payments and completing data matching to avoid duplicate applications or payments, and the payment of fraudulent invoices/applications.