

MEDIA RELEASE

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COTA NT's call for review of Home Improvement Scheme

COTA NT has asked the Northern Territory Government to review the Home Improvement Scheme to allow homeowners to use government vouchers to help with the purchase and installation of solar for their homes.

The Home Improvement Scheme is part of the Territory Government's recently launched, Jobs Rescue and Recovery plan. This \$65 million plan is intended to help stimulate the economy and keep Territorians in jobs. It is the second phase of the response to the significant economic impact of COVID-19 and is complementary to initiatives offered by the Australian Government to all jurisdictions.

Currently solar PV panels and solar PV install are excluded from the Home Improvement Scheme, but COTA NT would like to see them *included*. Potentially home improvements such as these may help senior Territorians further reduce the cost of living in the Territory, as well as support the government's aim to reduce carbon emissions and further promote use of renewable energy. Businesses should also be able to reduce their overheads which would then filter down to the consumer. Even off grid solar is not included in this scheme.

"We have heard from a number of seniors who want to introduce solar to their own homes with a long-term view of reducing their spend on power. Whilst we appreciate that changes to our grid and pricing structure may be required before the benefit of solar power is fully realised for these homeowners, we feel that this is an opportunity that shouldn't be missed," said Sue Shearer, CEO of COTA NT. "We know that cost of living is still a concern for many seniors and hence we are urging the Territory government to review the guidelines attached to this scheme's vouchers."

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More information,

<https://business.nt.gov.au/recovery>