

12th March, 2015

Dear Mr Baldwin

I am shocked, horrified, and angry after reading the Terms of Reference and Format of the Technical Advisory Forum.

The proposal that this august body can investigate the many flaws in ACORN-SAT in a one day sitting once a year is beyond ridicule, beyond parody. It is sillier than the funniest episodes of "Yes, Minister".

It is apparent that it has been set up not to investigate but to verify the Bureau's claims. It is a political solution to a perceived embarrassment. It has been set up to appease the Bureau's critics by seeming to examine their concerns without actually doing so, and without upsetting the Bureau or the ALP or Greens. It will be a whitewash.

The Technical Advisory Forum needs real teeth. It should be able to call witnesses, examine documents and analyse data. Instead it will listen to platitudes from the Bureau in the morning and have a discussion in the afternoon. What a joke!

Meanwhile, ACORN-SAT has been updated to include data to 31 December 2014. It has not been improved. It still has thousands of days of missing data, 954 days when minimum temperature exceeds maximum, still has gross and obvious errors anyone can recognise, still over-adjusts raw data so that 'homogenised' data is LESS comparable with neighbouring sites, and still results in Australia wide trends that are much greater than those shown by raw data.

I assume that you have acted on advice from your department. You have been hoodwinked. And unless you swiftly act to rewrite the Terms of Reference and Format for the Technical Advisory Forum to give it some real investigative power, this will be added to the list of bad decisions of a gutless government, more concerned about the opinions of the ABC, the press gallery, and the cross benches than its once loyal and hopeful supporters.

Yours in disgust

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