



New inquiry into meteorological forecasting

The House of Representatives Industry, Science and Innovation Committee is to conduct an inquiry into long-term meteorological forecasting in Australia.

Committee Chair Maria Vamvakinou welcomed the referral of this inquiry by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator Kim Carr.

“Weather plays a huge part in the lives of all Australians. Even simple daily activities are determined by the weather, and having access to accurate weather forecasting is essential”, Ms Vamvakinou said.

“In particular, accurate long-term forecasting is essential for many of our industry sectors, for example, our agricultural industry. Without accurate long-term forecasting, the planting of crops reliant on seasonal rains is a risky business”.

“This inquiry will examine Australia’s current climate modelling and forecasting methods and systems, and the impact of accurate forecasting on various decision-making processes. Disaster warnings and applications for emergency response will also be examined”.

The Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research requested that the committee inquire into and report on long-term meteorological forecasting with particular reference to:

- The efficacy of current climate modelling methods and techniques and long-term meteorological prediction systems;
- Innovation in long-term meteorological forecasting methods and technology;
- The impact of accurate measurement of inter-seasonal climate variability on decision-making processes for agricultural production and other sectors such as tourism;
- Potential benefits and applications for emergency response to natural disasters, such as bushfire, flood, cyclone, hail, and tsunami, in Australia and in neighbouring countries; and
- Strategies, systems and research overseas that could contribute to Australia’s innovation in this area.

Interested persons and organisations are invited to make written submissions to the inquiry by **Friday 24 April 2009**. Please contact the Committee Secretary if an extension is required. Further details, including the full terms of reference, membership of the committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the committee’s website at www.aph.gov.au/isi.

For media comment: contact the Committee Chair, Ms Maria Vamvakinou, on 0417 541 465.

For further information: contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4594, or isi.reps@aph.gov.au.