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The Senate Enquiry into the Home Insulation Program
The Senate
Federal Parliament
Canberra, ACT



Dear Sir

Home Insulation

We had aluminium foil ceiling insulation installed in our roof in June 2009 and received a refund under the Environmental scheme.

I wanted to make the Enquiry aware that we have now been approached by the same company which did the installation offering to inspect the insulation to ensure that it was safe. We understand that the cost of the inspection will be reimbursed to the company by the Government.

While I have confidence that they will ensure that our home is safe, I find the notion that the check will be performed by the same company that did the original work rather unusual and disturbing (shades of the poacher turned gamekeeper!). If any faults are found during the inspection one would expect them to be rectified forthwith, with or without our knowledge, but I would have no confidence that they would be reported to anyone outside the company. Any statistics on the percentage of installations which were found to be unsafe following inspections should therefore be treated as extremely conservative as there appears to be no reporting procedure in place to record defects in the original installation.

Aside from that, the insulation material has been placed in a haphazard fashion instead of being cut to fit between the roof joists so I have considerable doubt that it has its full potential effectiveness. Of course I did not pay for this work so it is hardly up to me to criticise it when the 'expert' installers claim that this is the normal way it is laid. However, there does not appear to be any incentive to install the material in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, nor would this be an issue for the safety check, so I daresay that the potential benefit of the insulation is not realised and a lot of government funding has been wasted through a lack of checks.

For your consideration

Peter Crawford