

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
26 November 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Minister Combet's speech

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 26 November 2012, and page 6).

QUESTION No.: SI-197

Senator BUSHBY: Are you aware whether, up to and including 2010, there were 34 consecutive years with global temperatures above the 20th century average?

Prof. Chubb: How many centuries ago?

Senator BUSHBY: In this century.

Senator CAMERON: You should not let others write these questions for you.

Senator BUSHBY: Up to and including 2010 were there 34 consecutive years—so that is the 34 years preceding—with temperatures above the 20th century average?

Prof. Chubb: Were there 34 consecutive years?

Senator BUSHBY: Yes.

CHAIR: Once again—

Senator BUSHBY: Once again, this quote comes from the speech I was referring to—the one I will table for the professor to comment on. There was a claim in there that, up to and including 2010, there were 34 consecutive years with global temperatures above the 20th century average.

Senator CAMERON: Whose speech was it?

Senator BUSHBY: Minister Combet's.

Senator CAMERON: Minister Combet's speech. There you go.

Prof. Chubb: No, I am not aware of that.

Senator BUSHBY: Please take that on notice. I will be providing that speech.

Senator LUNDY: To clarify: are you taking all these quotes from that speech, Senator Bushby?

Senator BUSHBY: Some of them. In fact, there will be one more and that is it. I have some other things I want to explore.

Senator LUNDY: You are asking the Chief Scientist to verify quotes from that speech? You have not, however, provided the speech or the context.

Senator BUSHBY: The particular things I am asking the Chief Scientist about were put forward as scientific fact.

Senator LUNDY: A better way might be to provide the speech and put the questions on notice.

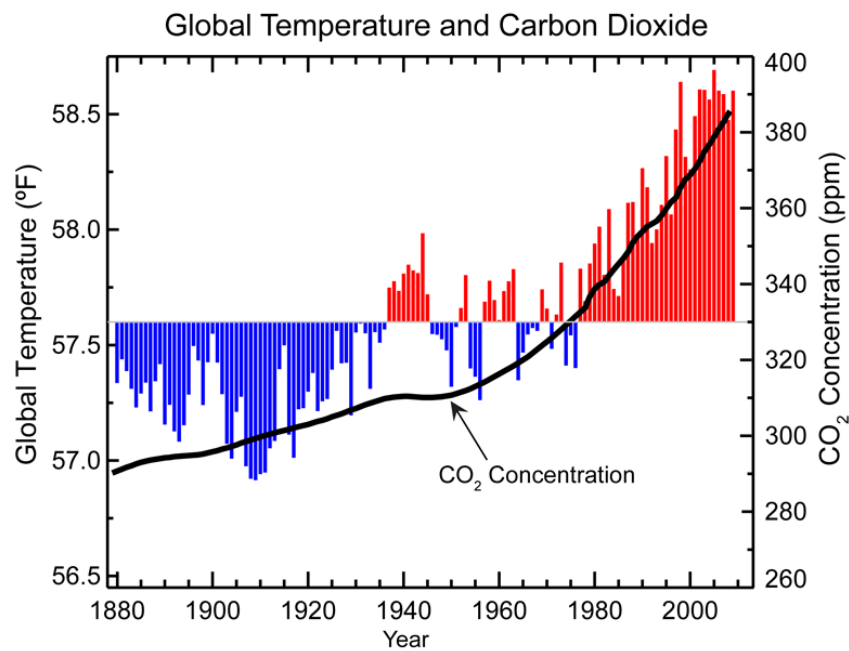
Senator BUSHBY: That is what I have undertaken to do. I had been hoping the professor might have been aware of some of these facts. But, if he is not, I am happy for him to take them on notice.

ANSWER

The following response has been provided by the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency which has responsibility for this matter.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Climatic Data Centre issued a statement on 12 January 2011 finding that 2010 ‘was the 34th consecutive year with global temperatures above the 20th century average’. The NOAA statement is available at: www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110112_globalstats.html

NOAA used the 20th century baseline of 1901 – 2000 to assess global temperature anomalies; whereas other agencies, such as the World Meteorological Organisation, have recently used the baseline period of 1961 – 1990.



Global annual average temperature measured over land and oceans. Red bars indicate temperatures above and blue bars indicate temperatures below the 1901-2000 average temperature. The black line shows atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration in parts per million. Figure available at www.ncdc.noaa.gov/indicators/.