Document 1

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 23 August 2012 9:24 AM
To: [redacted]
Cc: VIC RFC Forecasters; [redacted]
Subject: RE: Adaptive Soundings from surround states [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi [redacted],

thanks for the examples.

The adaptive sonde arrangements have been sorted on a region by region basis as has the budget - I am looking for good evidence of situation which justify the Vic region (which has maintained its full program at the expense of the other states) requesting an adaptive sonde from another state.

[redacted]

S22 - Irrelevant

Regards

[redacted]

[redacted] | Supervising Meteorologist | Victoria

Bureau of Meteorology
GPO Box 1636 Melbourne VIC 3001
6th Floor, 1010 Latrobe Street, Docklands VIC 3008
Tel: [redacted]
www.bom.gov.au

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 22 August 2012 20:40
To: [redacted]
Cc: VIC RFC Forecasters; [redacted]
Subject: RE: Adaptive Soundings from surround states [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi [redacted],

[redacted] (OEB) 26 July note indicated/implied the need for Regions to sort out planned and adaptive sonde arrangements (including via ISC) **prior** to the implementation of the reduced radiosonde program at the beginning of August. Despite previous efforts by [redacted] to get some action on this issue, no routine procedures have thus far been put into operation. Furthermore, your email indicates an intention to wait for further examples of forecast deficiencies resulting from the current lack of action before any guidelines will be developed by this Office on requesting adaptive sondes from other Regions!

You referred to an 8 August example in which the prevailing inertia on the sonde issue compromised the convective forecasting by this Office. Well, I've already been rostered on for 2 further such examples - i.e. 5 and 14 August. The first of these events I previously referred to in my 8 August email - a day when severe TSs were forecast in southern Vic (-see fig. 1), but no 00Z Gambier trace was received. For the second event, (a) no 00Z traces were received from Gambier and Wagga, (b) no TSs were forecast for Vic (-see fig 2), (c) GPATS strikes appeared over NW Vic during

the afternoon (-see fig. 3), precipitating an amended AREA forecast, and (d) NWP/satellite imagery indicated a cold pool located near Gambier at 00Z (-see fig. 4) - i.e. upstream from the unforecast TS activity.

The OEB letter specifically stated that we should be receiving 4 (planned) 00Z traces from Gambier and Wagga, yet we have been informed by SA/NSW management that, in fact, that there are/will only be 2 planned 00Z sondes from these stations each week. What is the explanation for the resultant halving of the proposed OEB program here?

[redacted]
S22 - Irrelevant

Regards,

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, August 22, 2012 3:44 PM
To: VIC RFC Forecasters
Subject: Adaptive Soundings from surround states [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

All,

I'm aware that the lack of a Gambier sounding on 8 August created difficulties regarding the forecasting of thunderstorms - details below. Would forecasters please keep me informed of situations where the lack of a sonde has impacted our decision making and provide an explanation in the manner below. I'm also keen to investigate any situations you anticipate there will be a significant impact.

I would like to be able to identify situations where the reduced sonde program will impact on the forecasts and then develop some guidelines on when and how to request an adaptive sonde from other regions.

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Supervising Meteorologist | Victoria

Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

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Today is the first example of a day when it would have been extremely handy to have a trace at Gambier for assessment of thunderstorm risk. Looking at the Melbourne trace from this morning there is a very warm slab of air just above the surface (12 or 13 degrees at 900hPa) which the models do not capture. A front will move through the southwest of the State today and models are indicating the potential for storms to develop along this feature, however given they haven't done a great job in capturing observed conditions in Melbourne it would be great to know how well they are capturing observed conditions further west nearer the change. Unfortunately though, we have no trace at Gambier to compare models with. I suspect the risk of storms is less, assuming, as in Melbourne, the cap is larger in the southwest than models predict, but I can't know for sure and so my 'educated guess' TS forecast is nearer the 'guess' end of the spectrum.

Document 2

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 12 October 2012 12:20
To: SA RFC Supervising Manager
Cc: SA RFC Operational Mets; SA Regional Director
Subject: FW: Woomera autosonde [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

G'day all,

This prompts me to send an email that I meant to send on my last SPOC night shift, but ran out of time.

On that shift, we had a Severe TS Warning out for the pastoral districts and SIGMETs as well for mechanical turbulence in the lee of the Flinders Ranges. So, we were very interested in the balloon flight at Woomera which had been ordered following our new procedures. Nice work from the day shift team.

I got a call from [redacted] at YPAD during the evening to say that the sonde at YPWR had failed and that he had tried numerous things to get it working, all to no avail. He gave a good explanation of what was going on, but it's 2 weeks ago now and I can't remember the detail.

Now, today is another instance (refer email from [redacted] below) where we're concerned about Fire Wx in the pastoral districts over the weekend and we will get nothing from YPWR autosonde.

These are another couple of great examples where the SPS idea and cost cutting are having seriously negative impacts on our ability to do a good job of forecasting the weather. It's great that we're saving money, but as far as providing a service goes it seems to be failing badly when it really counts. Not only that, it's wasting the time of the people deciding whether to order extra sondes and the YPAD people trying to sort out the problems.

Regards,

[redacted]

[redacted] | Meteorologist

Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

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Tel: [redacted]
www.bom.gov.au

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 12 October 2012 11:54 AM
To: SA Operations
Cc: [redacted]; [redacted]
Subject: Woomera autosonde [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

This mornings 23Z flight from Woomera did not launch due to a mechanical error, also unable to launch a second sonde remotely due to same error. Observer off duty until Monday, so unlikely to get a sonde up until then.

Regards

[redacted] | Technical Officer (Obs)

Adelaide Airport Observing Office
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Document 3

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL OFFICE
PO Box 421 Kent Town South Australia 5071

[redacted]
Regional Director

23/08/2012

[redacted]
Kyancutta SA 5651

Dear [redacted],

Re : Observations from Kyancutta

Thank you for your letter received 21 August, where you request the Bureau to reconsider the decision to reduce manual observations from Kyancutta, with consequence reduced payment.

Given your request we have re-considered the relevant issues, which are seen as ;

- The significantly reduced budget for manual observations from 2012/13 onward.
- The Bureau's on-going national strategy for greater automation and more cost effective operations.
- The comparative value of manual observations from Kyancutta to Bureau weather and climate services for South Australia.
- The proximity of other weather observations in the area.

Prior to reviewing the situation at Kyancutta, our Network Committee had put many hours of debate into how best to distribute the funds available for cooperative observations. Based on the national strategy of the Bureau for greater automation of observations leading to more cost effective data acquisition, it is clear that there is no scope to negotiate extra funds from our national managers for additional manual observations. The only option we have to re-instate additional observations at Kyancutta, such as that for 3 pm, would be to remove an equivalent observation from another location in the state. Unfortunately we do not see a reasonable option for that.

In the overall context of the value of manual observations to our weather and climate Services, there is seen to be no defensible advantage in re-instating a 3 pm observation at Kyancutta through the removal of an equivalent observation at another location. Included in that rationale is the fact that the Bureau operates an automatic weather station at Wudinna airstrip, which is just 15 kilometres from Kyancutta. Data provided by this station has shown that it has a very similar climatology to Kyancutta.

The highest value component of your observations from Kyancutta is the visual assessment of cloud type, height and atmospheric visibility. Those have always been very useful information to our forecasters in their assessment of current weather conditions in your area. Your visual observations provide "ground truth" of our remote sensing capabilities through satellites and radar. Standard automatic weather stations such as that at Wudinna currently do not have a capability to assess cloud and visibility. Within the next 5 to 10 years however, this capability will come to pass as we extend our roll out of remote sensing technologies, which will include web cameras, visibility and cloud height sensors.

So unfortunately the decision to reduce observations from Kyancutta to those at 6 am and 9 am stands. Whilst clearly this is not the preferred outcome I trust you understand the reasons for it [redacted]

[redacted] Irrelevant-S22 [redacted]

[redacted] Irrelevant-S22 [redacted]

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]
Regional Director
Bureau of Meteorology
South Australia

Document 4

COPY

[redacted]
Kyancutta 5651
15th August 2012

[redacted]
Acting Regional Director
Bureau of Meteorology
25 College Road
Kent Town

Ref 018044

Dear [redacted],

I refer to your letter of 18th July concerning a new weather observation contract commencing 1st September 2012.

[redacted] Irrelevant - S22

Just as the Bureau needs to review processes and achieve a cost effective mix to maintain a sustainable operation, [redacted] S47F [redacted] S47F

While 2 observations per day, namely 6am and 9am may suit your operations, I feel that the commitment required is too great for the monetary return.

[redacted] Irrelevant - S22

[redacted] Irrelevant - S22

Yours Faithfully

[redacted]