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Attention: Chief of Staff

Friends of the ABC congratulate the Coalition Government

The Friends of the ABC have welcomed the Government's action to depoliticise appointments to a statutory authority. An advertisement published in the weekend press (page 33 of the Weekend Australian, 29-30 March) seeks applications for vacancies on the Board of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. The Corporation's website (www.frdc.com.au) says that six directors will be appointed by the Minister on the recommendation of a selection committee comprising representatives of stakeholder organizations.

Commenting on the advertisement Friends of the ABC spokesperson Darce Cassidy said :
“The Friends of the ABC have long been calling for appointments to statutory authorities to be open, transparent and based on merit. We congratulate the government for the way it is handling appointments to the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. Now that it has recognised the value of such an approach, a similar system needs to be applied to other statutory authorities, including the ABC.”

“There is a vacancy on the ABC board, following the departure of Liberal identity Michael Kroger. Speculation on his replacement has focused on other Liberal identities, Christopher Pearson, Lynton Crosby and Tony Staley.”

“In the United Kingdom the Conservative government of John Major broke the vicious circle of board stacking in the UK when it introduced the Nolan Rules, a procedure for depoliticising public appointments. The Blair government continued the practice. The same approach should apply here, and not just to fisheries research.”

“We therefore call on the government to immediately advertise the current vacancy on the ABC Board. Failure to do so would look very fishy indeed.”

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