



DAVID MORRIS MP
Member for Mornington

SKM Warehouse Clean-up

Posted on 10 September 2019

Mr MORRIS (Mornington) (12:21:30): My question is to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

Last sitting week the minister confirmed that a \$10 million loan had been extended to the SKM receivers to clear out the accumulated recyclables at four company facilities. The minister said, and I quote, 'our priority is to get those dangerous stockpiles cleared up'. Minister, why are the stockpiles at these four SKM facilities more dangerous than those at other sites?

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park—Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Minister for Solar Homes) (12:22:11): I thank the member for Mornington for his question. I think the member fails to understand the purpose of the loan that was given to the receivers of SKM. Our priority has been very clear: to get these operations, these sites, cleaned up so that they can start to resume collection from kerbside.

This is the point of this loan to the receivers. It is as simple as that.

I also remind those opposite that it is the role of Environment Protection Authority Victoria to monitor safety, together with other agencies right across government—a joined-up process—to ensure that any stockpiled materials, whether it is in this area or in other areas, are deemed safe, and those who control the sites and the operators are actually held to account and are ultimately responsible for the management of these sites.

Our priority is to get recycling moving back here in Victoria. Our first priority is to get these locations up and going and cleaned up. I know from information from the receivers that they are well on the way to achieving that outcome.

Mr MORRIS (Mornington) (12:23:27): Five warehouses remain packed to the roof with recyclables—five equally dangerous stockpiles. When will the minister act to clean up these five dangerous sites?

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Mill Park—Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Minister for Solar Homes) (12:23:52): I thank the member for the supplementary question. I would suggest to the member that the EPA and other agencies across government have the responsibility to consider the safety and the conditions within which the owners of these sites maintain their facilities.

Mr Morris: On a point of order, Speaker, the minister has intervened to clean up four sites.

The question was: why won't she intervene to clean up the remaining five?

The SPEAKER: I understand the point of order, but the minister is being relevant to the supplementary question that was asked.

Ms D'AMBROSIO: The facts are these: these areas that contain these stockpiled materials are matters for businesses that are going concerns, and there are contractual arrangements in place for those operators, the owners of these facilities, to be able to work their way through it with—

Mr M O'Brien: On a point of order, Speaker, is the minister saying that if you run a failed business, you get government money to clean up, but if you are an innocent victim, you get nothing? That is what she seems to be saying.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The minister to continue.

Ms D'AMBROSIO: Thank you, Speaker, and I think the Leader of the Opposition, for the second time two weeks running, has actually got it wrong. The receivers are in charge of these sites. They are getting on with the business of cleaning them up, reducing the risks associated with that and getting these operations back in place so that they can start to receive recycled material.