




Speech By
Samuel O'Connor

MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

QPlas

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.56 pm): The government has an issue with delivering the environmental announcements they make. The \$100 million Resource Recovery Industry Development Program opened to businesses in September 2018. I have spoken before about how badly this program was rolled out—over \$811 million in applications but less than half of the \$100 million was actually spent. Today I am going to explain how this mismanagement impacted just one business.

QPlas from Townsville make composite products for agriculture, construction, mining, road and rail infrastructure, and transport logistic markets from 100 per cent wood residues and second-life plastics. They were approached by an entrepreneur about using hardwood waste and plastic waste to make composite products—anything from tomato stakes to rail sleepers. This is exactly what the fund was for: finding solutions for what to do with a waste product. QPlas applied for the RRIDP in August 2020. They were accepted into stream 2 in September 2020 and put in a full application.

In October the member for Townsville got in touch and QPlas took it as a congratulations on being successful. However, in November they were told they had just passed gateway 1 and were being considered for the next stage. A few weeks later they were told they had passed gateway 2 and would find out more in December that year. They were then told the panel would not be meeting until February 2021 and they would hear more then.

When they contacted the state development department in February they were told the RRID Program had been discontinued, but they did not need to worry because their application had been put into a new fund, the Recycling Modernisation Fund, and they would be the first cab off the rank for that fund. There was still no word and then in April that year they were told nothing else was required of them and they would hear soon. By December 2021 there was still no word, so I wrote to the Deputy Premier about the business still being in limbo, and I table the letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 10 December 2021, from the member for Bonney, Mr Sam O'Connor MP, to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic Infrastructure, Hon. Dr Steven Miles, regarding the Resource Recovery Industry Development Program [1683](#).

Finally, another seven months later and two years since first applying for support, in August this year they were told they were unsuccessful. This process is absolutely ridiculous. It is even worse when we factor in the cost of professionally putting together an application for this fund, which is around \$5,000, and some businesses have told me consultant costs have been up to \$15,000. The website for the successor grant program to this, the RMF, shows no projects approved for funding. We were the last state to sign up to the RMF and businesses in Queensland are still missing out because in other states grants supporting recycling projects have been there for months or, in some cases, even years.

The Energy and Jobs Plan includes similar recycling grant programs to these. We cannot allow the same mismanagement to occur. I urge the government to start caring about more than just how things look.