



Sid Sidebottom MP ... for a fair go in Braddon

MEDIA RELEASE

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MIRABELLA MISCHIEF ON PAPER MILL JOBS

Opposition spokesman on Industry Sophie Mirabella is being deliberately mischievous over the jobs and lives of paper mill workers says the Federal Member for Braddon, Sid Sidebottom MP.

Mr Sidebottom said comments from Mrs Mirabella after a visit to the region on Monday were not helpful and only sought to score points.

"I will reiterate again that the Pulp and Paper Industry Strategy Group was formed for the purposes of developing a strategic plan for the industry nationwide. In the process it was hoped that it could or might assist Paperlinx in its assessment of its Tasmanian mills," Mr Sidebottom said.

"Paperlinx is a member of the review panel and was well aware of what was going on in the review process.

"I would further emphasise that the review panel asked for an extension from the Minister to comprehensively complete its review, a decision that Paperlinx was also part of.

"To suggest that the national review was intimately connected to the decision by Tas Paper on its mills is just mischievous conjecture as Richard Colbeck well knows and Tas Paper has made clear publicly on a number of occasions.

"Sophie Mirabella knows this and was part of a former government that did little to nothing to assist to develop a sustainable strategic plan for the industry over a decade.

"I also find it offensive but not surprising that the Opposition are now attempting to grandstand on the bad news surrounding the closure of our mills. They had nothing constructive to say in the past and have nothing constructive to say now."

Mr Sidebottom said he also noted that the Shadow Minister did not meet with worker representatives but was quick to criticise unions for doing their job to protect the entitlements and conditions of their members.

"The innovation and investment package has been developed over some time and is based on the experiences in other regions that have faced major industrial lay-offs and is tailored to support and encourage investment in current and future industries to absorb the impact of the mill closures.

"The package under the auspices of the State Government and AusIndustry will involve taking into account the emerging conditions that accompany closures such as McCain's and Tas Paper and will work with the local community, employees and employers to best meet their needs into the future."

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