

2019.04.30

13 Senator S.C. Ferguson of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the provision of a safe location where damaged electric vehicles could be stored temporarily: (OQ.103/2019)

Will the Minister advise whether Driver and Vehicle Standards have collaborated with the Fire and Rescue Service to provide a safe location where damaged electric vehicles can be stored temporarily (with access to a firefighting system), in order to mitigate the risks of damage arising from any recurrence of battery pack ignitions?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

Vehicles presented to Driver and Vehicle Standards for any post collision investigations are stored in the D.V.S. (Driver and Vehicle Standards) secure compound until such time as they are due to be inspected. At which time they are moved to the test station for inspection. Once the inspection is complete, the vehicles are removed from the test station and returned to the compound. D.V.S. disconnects and isolates the battery, if this has not already been done prior to arrival. Officers inspect to establish that there is no cable damage and that the battery compartment is still intact. There is no formal arrangement with the Fire and Rescue Service; however, all D.V.S. traffic officers are trained in the handling and inspection of such vehicles and equipment.

4.13.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

We are talking about a battery fire and reignition. Most electric vehicles appear, if they have a battery fire, to have reignition and the authorities in various countries have found that the only cure is to dump the car into an oversized skip full of water. Has the D.V.S. taken this into account?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, D.V.S. are fully aware of all the new battery compounds, lithium batteries, *et cetera*, not just car batteries, even mobile phone batteries are handled with extreme care. D.V.S. will continue to review the process as more electrical vehicles come online, but they are fully up to date with all the specifications.

4.13.2 The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is the Minister aware of any electric vehicles that have caught fire in the last 10 years?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I believe there was something with an electric bike battery, a faulty battery, recently, possibly in Grouville.

4.13.3 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Have the Fire Service been consulted about the location of the charging points in Sand Street car park, which could block entry and exits if there was a battery fire, in fact?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I am not too sure about that, but, obviously, they are all installed by the Jersey Electric Company, who are fully conversant with all the latest technology. I am not sure if that was part of the planning process, or any of the agreements, but more than happy to check up on that.