



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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SAFETY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE; ADVENTURE TOURISM

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (10.27 a.m.): On Monday of this week I was pleased to represent the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations in opening the Safety Institute of Australia, Queensland Division, conference in Cairns. The conference was well supported by the Division of Workplace Health and Safety and WorkCover Queensland. It is timely, in light of the strong stand of the Minister and this Government on workplace health and safety issues.

One of the important actions taken has been to increase the number of workplace health and safety inspectors, particularly those targeting construction sites. This has been welcomed by Dave Hanna, the BLF organiser who has campaigned on this issue. The previous Government seemed to have deaf ears when it came to this issue. I congratulate him on his strong and continuing leadership in the region on this matter.

There should be, as was said at the conference, zero tolerance of workplace health and safety breaches, while at the same time it should be ensured that industry knows and expects that breaches will be dealt with consistently and that there is predictability as to the high standards expected.

I also draw attention to the importance, particularly in Cairns, of adventure tourism. It is, of course, a risky business. Popular tourism activities such as scuba diving, snorkelling, whitewater rafting, horse riding, parasailing and bungee jumping are heavily marketed to novice participants, and therein lies part of the difficulty. We are well led in the workplace health and safety division by dive inspector Chris Coxon in Cairns, who has, with Dive Queensland and particularly Col McKenzie, taken a lead in the revisions presently under way to the code of practice for recreational diving and recreational snorkelling at a workplace. Only by monitoring and working with the industry to develop even higher standards than we already have can we make sure that these activities are safe, fun and easy for the people who visit the Great Barrier Reef and other adventure tourism outlets.
