



Speech by

Hon. GORDON NUTTALL

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Hansard 18 April 2002

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Advisory Service

Hon. G. R. NUTTALL (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: Last Friday I had the great pleasure of launching Queensland's first advisory service to help this state's young workers understand their rights and responsibilities in the workplace. The state Labor government's new Youth Advisory Service was an election commitment to the people of Queensland—and it is now fully operational. It is Queensland's first dedicated youth employment rights service, designed specifically to help young people aged under 25 understand their legal rights and what is expected of them in the workplace.

Workers at the service will provide information regarding legislation, wages, conditions of employment, unfair dismissal, workplace discrimination, sexual harassment and workplace bullying. It will also provide representation before courts and tribunals and establish and maintain a network with other agencies such as unions and employer groups and other community organisations to better promote issues for young workers. As well, the service will be responsible for developing and delivering educational workshops, seminars and lectures.

A service like this one for our young workers is critical. The Youth Advisory Service will help to address the recent concerns that I raised in this House regarding the underpayment of youth wages. A blitz by my department on time and wages records across Queensland late last year found that almost 60 per cent of the 381 employees who had been underpaid were aged between 15 and 24.

Starting work is an exciting time in the lives of young people and having a job means many new responsibilities. Yet many young workers are frequently confused or are simply not aware of their rights in the workplace. By adopting an active approach and working with other government agencies, industry groups, schools and unions, the Young Workers Advisory Service will help educate and empower young people so that they are better informed and prepared for life in the workplace. The service will be managed as an independent service by the Queensland Working Women's Service, funded by my department to the tune of at least \$300,000 a year for three years. My staff are currently delivering an information kit to all 89 honourable members, who I hope will help me to promote this much-needed service to all young workers across Queensland.