



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Thursday, 21 May 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Workplace Audits

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11.20 am): The Bligh government, like all good Labor governments, has a strong record of protecting workers' rights. As we continue to strive for a fair and just Queensland, this remains one of our key priorities. Particularly in these tough economic times, it is vitally important that workers receive the correct pay they are entitled to from their employers. That is why this government continues to ensure that there are appropriate safeguards and checks in place to make sure that correct wages and entitlements are delivered into the pay packets of Queensland employees.

Our industrial relations inspectors work tirelessly to investigate employee complaints about incorrect and outstanding pay. Checks are conducted across Queensland all year round to ensure that workers are not being ripped off. In the first three months of this year, our inspectors conducted more than 1,300 wage audits and worker complaints investigations on behalf of more than 3,000 employees. Already, nearly \$1 million has been recovered for Queensland workers in outstanding or incorrect wages. That is \$1 million Queensland workers would have been forced to go without if these audits had not taken place.

This government is committed to securing workers' pay packets so that Queensland families are protected. We are dedicated to protecting workers' rights and providing safe, just and fair workplaces for all Queenslanders. Last year, \$4 million in wages was recovered through audits on behalf of nearly 17,500 Queensland workers. Regrettably, 43 employers were prosecuted for consistently and deliberately doing the wrong thing by their employees. Others were happy to reimburse workers once they became aware of their errors as a result of audits by our department.

These checks are conducted in a range of industries, including hospitality, retail, fast food, transport, construction and engineering, and fruit and vegetable growing. These checks are carried out to protect some of Queensland's most vulnerable employees and to ensure that Queenslanders continue to receive their lawful entitlements.

I urge all employers and employees to familiarise themselves with the rights and obligations that they are entitled to and are obliged to perform under Queensland's industrial laws to ensure that every Queenslanders receives a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.