



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Thursday, 17 September 2009

ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (6.03 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the debate on the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2009. In particular, I thank my colleagues on the government side of the House for their contributions.

The bill makes a number of positive legislative changes, including an amendment to the Electrical Safety Act 2002 to introduce a ministerial power to order the mandatory recall of unsafe electrical equipment. This amendment brings Queensland's ability to recall unsafe electrical equipment into line with other jurisdictions and will contribute to the reduction of risk to Queenslanders from unsafe electrical equipment in the community.

The bill also amends the Electrical Safety Act 2002 and the Electrical Safety Regulation 2002 to include 'Airtrain Citylink Ltd' in the meaning of 'electricity entity' and 'prescribed electricity entity'. This makes the electrical safety obligations of Airtrain consistent with those of QR Network Pty Ltd, including in relation to safety management systems for rail electrical infrastructure.

Amendments to the Industrial Relations Act 1999 and other consequential acts, regulations and rules enable the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission website to become the official publication for decisions, awards, agreements, orders and other documents of the Industrial Court of Queensland, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Industrial Registrar.

The bill amends the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005 to extend the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme coverage to workers in the industry who perform cleaning work but are currently excluded. The amendments also provide increased penalties for repeat offender employers who fail to contribute to the scheme and make improvements to the efficiency and administration of the scheme.

This bill continues the Bligh government's commitment to the rights of workers and to workplace and community health and safety. In response to a question put by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Southern Downs, as to whether there would be significant expansion of the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme for the contract cleaning industry, I indicate at this stage that it is anticipated that cleaners working outside buildings in the South Bank Parklands will be the cleaners covered by that proposed expansion at this time. There may be other cleaners as we move forward, but that is the anticipated number and not a significant number.

Through the introduction of a mandatory recall power for electrical products, this bill will improve electrical safety for Queenslanders by ensuring that the government can take appropriate action when it believes safety is an issue or has the potential to be a risk to life or property. Additionally, the bill formalises electricity entity obligations for Airtrain Citylink Ltd by including the requirement for a safety management system for its rail electricity infrastructure.

The bill also improves public access to information by making decisions, awards, agreements, orders and other documents of the Industrial Court of Queensland, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Industrial Registrar freely available on the QIRC website.

Finally, the bill clarifies Portable Long Service Leave Scheme coverage for contract cleaning industry workers and provides a means of improving the administration, efficiency and compliance remedies regarding the scheme.

I believe the amendments introduced by this bill will be of benefit to Queenslanders by improving electrical safety outcomes, access to information and long service leave arrangements for the contract cleaning industry. In conclusion, I once again thank all members for their contributions to the debate on this bill. I also wish to acknowledge the work of officers of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for their efforts in preparing this bill and Rhett Moxham of my office, who has contributed significantly to this bill and a number of pieces of legislation over a period of time and I wish him well in his future endeavours. I commend the bill to the House.