



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Thursday, 28 October 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Public Holidays 2011

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.00 am): In 2011, for the first time in the history of Queensland's public holiday legislation, Easter Monday and Anzac Day will fall on the same date—25 April. Both Easter Monday and Anzac Day are nominated as public holidays under the Holidays Act 1983. As the minister responsible for the administration of that act, I can designate a substitute public holiday for any of the public holidays listed.

In accordance with those provisions, I have decided—after considerable public consultation—that a substitute public holiday for Easter Monday will be observed on Tuesday, 26 April 2011. This means that Queenslanders will enjoy a rare five-day long weekend as a result of this once-in-a-generation clash of dates. This is the first time this has occurred in the three decades that we have had public holiday laws. These days represent two of the most significant religious and national events on our calendar, and the government firmly believes that the community should have the opportunity to celebrate both. However, this decision will not result in an extra public holiday. It is merely transferring a public holiday, which workers are entitled to, to the following day.

This decision is good news for workers, particularly those who are employed in occupations that tend to operate over holiday periods. Our decision means that employees working on either 25 or 26 April, or both, will get public holiday penalty rates according to their relevant award or agreement. This will not increase overall wages costs for employers because, as I have already said, the decision maintains the same number of public holidays as in 2010. This decision has been made after consultation and consideration of submissions from a range of stakeholders including unions, employer organisations, religious organisations and the RSL. It means that public holidays in Queensland for the 2011 Easter period will be: Good Friday on 22 April, Easter Saturday on 23 April, Anzac Day on 25 April, and a substitute public holiday for Easter Monday on Tuesday, 26 April.

Workers deserve a consistent number of public holidays each year to allow for rest, relaxation and celebration of significant religious and cultural events. The decision also ensures consistency with most of the other states and territories. These changes mean that the Anzac Day public holiday will remain on 25 April. The limitations on business operations that occur on Anzac Day because of its special nature will continue to apply.

As a Labor minister for industrial relations, I also want to express my condolences to the family of Aussie Vaughan, a stalwart of the Queensland union movement. Aussie was a humble, honest and honourable man, respected by workers, employers and governments alike. I salute his life's work which was dedicated to improving the lives of Queenslanders.