



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 February 2016

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Jobs**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.21 pm): Jobs and job creation are the Palaszczuk government's top priority. A total of 71,700 jobs have been created in Queensland since the state election. While we are proud of this record, we recognise that there is more work to be done when it comes to jobs. That is why this year I am holding a series of employment forums throughout the state including one in Mackay this Friday. I will be joined by the very busy member for Mackay, who has long fought for jobs in her electorate. Employer and industry groups, businesses, local government representatives and other stakeholders will also be attending. This forum is all about job creation and better employment outcomes for the local community.

Queensland's average youth unemployment rate is down by nearly one per cent over the last 12 months, but it is still too high at just over 13 per cent. Some of our major regional centres including Mackay, with its youth unemployment rate of just over 16 per cent, face particular challenges—challenges that we are committed to tackling. Unemployment has adverse effects on the future opportunities for young Queenslanders. That is why job creation initiatives for younger Queenslanders are at the centre of the Palaszczuk government's priorities. The complexity of factors affecting labour market outcomes including youth rates of unemployment will require a combination of approaches and initiatives.

Our \$1.6 billion Working Queensland jobs package is implementing a range of initiatives targeted at supporting young people to find suitable employment. Working Queensland includes the government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, which represents a significant investment of \$240 million over four years to support up to 32,000 Queenslanders into work. Skilling Queenslanders for Work includes the Get Set for Work program, which provides intensive employment and training assistance to Queenslanders aged 15 to 19. Get Set for Work has funded 57 projects worth \$7 million to assist over 2,100 young people. Our Ready for Work program has funded 59 projects worth \$1.6 million to assist over 2,500 young people with job search assistance and training. I am also pleased to inform the House that our Youth Employment Program specifically assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth jobseekers.

Education also has a role to play in assisting young jobseekers. Our Advancing Education action plan targets a rate of 90 per cent of young people being in education, training or employment after completing year 12. It has a specific focus on science, technology, engineering and maths, or STEM, to support young people to be prepared for jobs of the future.

Unlike those opposite, who sacked thousands of hardworking Queenslanders and delivered increases in our unemployment rate, we will never give up on jobs. We will continue to explore new ideas and innovative ways to create employment opportunities for Queenslanders. Young people will always be front and centre of our jobs agenda because we know that they represent Queensland's future.