




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Safe Work Month

 **Hon. G GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.04 am): Last week I officially launched Safe Work Month at a free breakfast in King George Square that was attended by hundreds of city workers. The breakfast included plenty of giveaways, information and health checks, but it had a serious message—that is, that workplace safety must be a priority for every Queenslanders.

Queensland Safety Ambassador, Shane Webcke, and Asbestos Safety Ambassador, Trevor Gillmeister, were also there to spread the message about workplace safety. Both know too well what can happen when things go wrong in the workplace. They both lost their fathers to work related incidents—Shane's father in a farm accident and Trevor's to mesothelioma. Shane Webcke will be travelling throughout Queensland during Safe Work Month, attending a series of breakfasts and other events to remind workers and businesses about the need for vigilance in the workplace.

The tragic events at Eagle Farm racecourse last week, which claimed the lives of two construction workers, is a stark reminder of the need for vigilance, particularly on dangerous construction sites. My heart goes out to the family and friends of those who tragically lost their lives. On behalf of the government and members of this House, I express my deepest sympathy to all of those affected. Workplace Health and Safety Queensland is now conducting a thorough investigation into these events and I expect to receive a report on the investigation as soon as possible.

I have personally spoken with the families of both of the victims and offered them any assistance and support, including access to relevant information. The government will consider any course of action available to avoid a repeat of this tragedy. In recognition of the impact these events can have on families, friends and co-workers, Workplace Health and Safety is providing access to free counselling services. I also want to thank all emergency services personnel who were first on site following this tragic accident.

In addition, support is also available through the Victims Families Support Committee, chaired by Michael Garrels, which was set up by the Palaszczuk government to deliver improved assistance and information to families of workers injured or killed at work. While Queensland's statistics are trending in the right direction, there is far more work to be done. I want to encourage all Queensland workplaces to get behind Safe Work Month and to participate in the events that are taking place throughout the state. Everybody deserves to come home safely at the end of each working day, which is the clear message being spread during Safe Work Month.