




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Safe Work Month; Mental Health Week

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.10 am): October is Safe Work Month—a time for us to really focus on workplace health and safety messaging, because all Queensland workers have the right to come home safely every night after a hard day's work. During October the department of industrial relations is running industry forums, toolbox talks and community events around the state to raise awareness of this important issue. In the first week the King George Square breakfast again drew big crowds as did the Safe Work and Return to Work Awards ceremony, and I thank the member for Greenslopes, Joe Kelly, for presenting the awards on my behalf. Throughout the rest of the month Workplace Health and Safety Queensland is hosting eight breakfast forums in regional locations. Safe Work Month will culminate with the Injury Prevention and Return to Work Conference in Brisbane. Our ambassadors Shane Webcke, Libby Trickett and Trevor Gillmeister, as well as our safety advocates, are in full swing at events across the state, each sharing their own experiences and their passion for keeping people safe and healthy.

While work safety figures are trending in the right direction, we all can do more to make workplaces safe and healthy. Doing so means more workers will go home safely to their families and loved ones at shift's end and our employers will continue to enjoy the lowest workers compensation premiums of any state. We are spreading safety messages far and wide, including through our school kids in rural communities. Earlier this week I announced the 12 winners of the 2019 Farm Safety calendar. I love the Farm Safety calendar. This is a drawing competition for primary school students which highlights important messages about quad bikes, farm machinery, animal handling, sun safety and healthy lifestyles. This year the competition attracted more than 1,800 entries. All MPs have received a copy of the calendar and I encourage them to hang it in their offices or homes to promote farm safety.

Last week was also Mental Health Week. Our government has stepped up its efforts to create mentally healthy workplaces. Earlier this year I announced WorkCover Queensland is funding psychological support for workers while they navigate their way through some of the processes which support a workers compensation claim. Targeting health, safety and wellbeing in our workplaces is good for Queensland workers, is good for business and is good for our economy.