



Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Safe Work Month

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.54 am): October is Safe Work Month—a time to shine a spotlight on safety and wellbeing in the workplace, and I encourage Queenslanders to get involved. I also acknowledge national Dyslexia Awareness Day today.

One of the highlights of the month is our Safe Work and Return to Work Awards, held on Wednesday, 9 October in Brisbane. I was incredibly impressed by all finalists and the contribution they have made to the health and safety of their workplaces. The stories and triumphs of the finalists, particularly those who have been injured at work, remind us all that work safety should never be compromised because everyone has the right to a safe workplace.

Mackay's Jordan Williams is an undisputed champion of rehabilitation and return to work, taking out one of the injured worker achievement awards. I know that the member for Mackay was particularly pleased to see that. While he was repairing a conveyor, Jordan suffered horrendous injuries and was told he would never walk again. Jordan refused to accept this outcome, overcoming setbacks and endless rehabilitation. Sadly, Jordan could not return to work as a boilermaker but, with the support of his employer, he is now training to become a draftsman. It was an incredibly emotional moment when he walked up on stage to accept his award.

Safe Work Month kicked off two weeks ago with a community breakfast in King George Square which I was pleased to host with our safety ambassadors—the wonderful Libby Trickett and the ever vivacious Shane Webcke.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms GRACE: He is! We also held a Mental Health Forum on 10 October at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre at South Brisbane. Also, the Injury Prevention and Return to Work Conference is being held today in Brisbane.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms GRACE: I think he would love me saying that, to be honest with you. Breakfast forums are taking place in nine regional centres and our safety advocates are also hard at work speaking to workers at nearly 100 sites across Queensland.

I was also pleased to join Minister Anthony Lynham and the Collinsville and Scottville communities on Sunday at the Collinsville Miners Memorial Day. I believe that the member for Whitsunday was there as well. This year marks the 65th anniversary of the tragic mining accident in 1954.

This government will continue to work hard to ensure every worker goes home to their loved ones at the end of the day, including workers on our farms and rural properties who are required to use quad bikes as part of their jobs. The Palaszczuk government is leading the nation in responding to the issue

of quad bike deaths and injuries through a much broader, comprehensive strategy including the launch of our 'Ride ready' website and an ongoing safety awareness campaign, with new regulations due for public consultation in early 2020.

I thank the quad bike safety advocates Jodie and Mario Cocco from Atherton, whose son Domenic suffered life-threatening injuries in a quad bike accident, for sharing their story. I would also like to acknowledge our other safety advocates: Julie and Don Sager, Debbie and Dan Kennedy, Lee Garrels, Bill Martin, Jed Millen, Gavan McGuane and Garry Nichols. It does not matter where you work—in the city or on the land, in an office or at a construction site, in a factory or in hospitality: workplace safety should never be compromised.