




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Australian Mines Rescue Competition; Mine Safety

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.41 am): Today the Aquila underground coalmine near Middlemount in the Bowen Basin is hosting this year's Australian Mines Rescue Competition. This competition is an important event in maintaining strong safety standards in our mining industry. I look to the teams of women and men participating in this event with admiration for the work that they do and I wish them every success, not just in the competition but their commitment to mine safety. Annual competitions like the Australian Mines Rescue Competition, the Queensland based EK Healy Cup and Queensland Mines Rescue Service Memorial Cup are also vital to testing, improving and maintaining emergency response capability in the industry. They also help build relationships and comradery between workers across sites.

Just like most competitions we participate in, Queenslanders have a proud record of success in the Australian Mines Rescue Competition. The last time it was held in 2019 all three teams in the top three were from Queensland mines, as were four of the top five. The member for Waterford will be pleased to hear that the 2019 winning team from the Grosvenor mine workforce was the first team in 57 years to win the competition with a female team member. Sensational!

While friendly competition is important, what is more important is the ability this competition gives our mine rescue teams to test out their capabilities. Mine rescue response capability is a critical part of ensuring the safety of our mine workers each and every day. When accidents happen in Queensland mines, as happened in the Crinum mine near Emerald last month, it was our brave Queensland mines rescue personnel who were first on scene. All of us in this place are aware of this incident and the tragedy it brings. As first responders, mine rescue was ready.

The safety of our workers is the Palaszczuk government's No. 1 priority in the resource sector. That is why our Queensland resource operations have been taking part in an industry-wide safety reset that I initiated as part of our commitment to all of our workers to protect their right to go home safely at the end of their shift with all of their fingers, toes and eyes working as they started. This safety reset exercise was last undertaken in 2019. This time it involves not just the mining and quarrying industries but extends to explosives, petroleum and gas workers. The safety reset is focused on the principal findings from Dr Sean Brady's review of fatalities in Queensland's mining and quarrying industry between 2000 and 2019. Any loss of life on a Queensland mine site is absolutely unacceptable. Even when operations look to be running safely, we must constantly be on the lookout for those hazards. It is described in Dr Brady's review as 'developing a culture of chronic unease'.

I am pleased to report that, as of Friday, a total of 862 safety resets have been held across Queensland's resource industry sites. It is also important that workers, site management and industry leaders take this opportunity to focus on what is clearly the most important thing in this industry: the safety of its people. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to a safe and healthy work environment for everyone in Queensland's resource industry.