



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Work Health and Safety Act, Review**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.49 am): Every single worker in Queensland has a right to be safe in the workplace and to return home safe and healthy to their families and loved ones at the end of the day. Robust health and safety laws are critical to ensuring workers are protected and that those in control of workplaces are held to account if the law and regulations are not followed.

The Palaszczuk government has a strong and proud history of standing up for and protecting workers in our great state. Queensland's Work Health and Safety Act was comprehensively reviewed in 2017 in response to the Dreamworld and Eagle Farm tragedies. The best practice review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland included 58 recommendations concerning both operational and legislative measures to ensure Queensland has the highest work health and safety standards.

Arising from this review significant amendments were made to the act including the introduction—the first in the nation—of industrial manslaughter laws and the establishment of an independent Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. Since 2017 the inspectorate has undergone a refocusing to compliance and a wide range of new standards have been set including in the areas of amusement ride safety and protecting workers from silicosis and other dust lung diseases. We will never rest on our laurels when it comes to workers' safety.

To ensure Queensland's laws remain robust, effective and enforceable, it is time for a review to occur five years on from the best practice review. The review will commence next week. The review will be undertaken by three independent reviewers: Craig Allen, former director-general of the Office of Industrial Relations; Charles Massy, a barrister specialising in industrial relations and employment; and Deirdre Swan, former deputy president of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. Craig, Charles and Deirdre are eminently qualified and bring a mix of regulatory, practical and legal perspectives to this important review.

The independent reviewers will also be assisted by leading academics in the area of work health and safety regulation and, of course, my department. The review will have a strong focus on consultation with stakeholders including industry groups, employers, registered industrial organisations, the legal profession, academics and government agencies. An interim report will be provided to me by mid-November with a final report expected to follow shortly thereafter. I look forward to receiving the report and any recommendations to strengthen our nation-leading work health and safety laws for workers in this state.