

# Media Release

**Mr Danny Pearson MP**

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Assistant Treasurer

Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC



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## QUESTION FOR EMPLOYERS: WOULD YOU WORK FOR YOU?

The Allan Labor Government is asking employers to see themselves through the eyes of young workers and ask: “Would you work for you?”

WorkSafe’s new young worker campaign starts today to increase awareness of the challenges young workers face and highlight employers’ responsibilities to ensure their safety.

Young workers are particularly vulnerable due to their inexperience and reluctance to speak up if something is wrong or they don’t understand a task or instruction.

The campaign reminds employers that they must make sure young workers have the training and guidance to stay safe at work.

Since 2018, 19 workers aged 15 to 24 have died as a result of workplace incidents, while 2,240 young workers have been injured seriously enough to lodge a WorkCover claim since the start of this year.

Construction, manufacturing, accommodation and food services, and health care and social assistance had the highest amount of claims. The most common causes of injuries were being hit by moving objects, body stressing, and falls, trips and slips.

Employers who put the safety of young workers at risk because they fail to provide a safe workplace, including safe systems and appropriate information, instruction, and supervision, can face criminal charges.

Since 2022 WorkSafe has completed 13 successful prosecutions for safety incidents involving apprentices – including a component manufacturer and its director fined \$2.2 million last month after a 20-year-old apprentice sustained life-changing head injuries when he was struck by a pipe being threaded on a lathe at a Gippsland factory.

The prosecutions also include cases where young apprentices were injured after being left to work unsupervised.

In August, an electrical company was ordered to pay \$25,000 after a young apprentice suffered third degree burns to his hand when was left alone to fit off a junction box underneath a house.

In August last year, a mechanic was ordered to pay \$26,000 after instructing two apprentices to drill holes in a vehicle fuel tank to drain it, then leaving them unsupervised, leading to a fire that caused burns to both workers.

The “Would you work for you?” campaign will run across print, radio, online and socials, including translations in 10 languages. For more information about safety for young workers search “WorkSafe Young Workers”.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson**

*“Employers have a duty to keep young workers safe while they learn in their jobs and develop their skills. We’re asking employers to put themselves in a young workers’ shoes and ask the question: Would you work for you?”*

### **Quote attributable to WorkSafe Executive Director Health and Safety Narelle Beer**

*“Sadly, we still see cases where young workers suffer terrible injuries, so we’re asking employers to stop and think about the crucial role that they play in keeping young workers safe.”*

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