

## **Inquest into the death of Adam Douglas Forster**

Adam Douglas Forster died on 25 October 2011 at Pacific Mineral Development in Corromba where he was employed as the sales and marketing manager. Mr Forster was sweeping up spillage from the floor of the mill room. He came too close to the rotating ball mill and became ensnared by the protruding bolts and was dragged underneath the ball mill which continued to rotate, causing his fatal injuries.

Coroner Alan Comans delivered his findings of inquest on 4 March 2014.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible agency named in the response.

### **Recommendation 1**

The recommendation made now is for the policy makers and advisors of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to consider the circumstances of Mr Forster's death to see what else may reasonably be done or done better to educate very small business operators in order to foster a culture of workplace health and safety into their operations.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Queensland Treasury.

On 12 September 2015 the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships responded:

The response recognises two challenges in engaging with small business operators. First, there are nearly 150,000 small businesses in Queensland. Second, small businesses have limited resources for understanding and complying with regulations.

The Office of Industrial Relations Queensland (OFSWQ) operates a small business program dedicated to educating and supporting small businesses and assisting them to foster a culture of workplace health and safety in their operations.

The program offers free workshops held in various centres across Queensland, free workshop consultations with a safety advisor on request and coaching sessions for small groups of businesses in similar industries or locations. The program also promotes information in printed and online formats including tools, templates and checklists for safety management systems, workplace hazards, policies and procedures.

As part of a longer term strategy, the program is also partnering with Queensland industry associations to delivered tailored tools, advice and workshops to their small business members on health and safety. The Industry Partnership Program has started to work in the electrical and construction industries with plans to expand into other priority areas during 2015.

In December 2014 OFSWQ and WorkCover Queensland partnered to launch a safety and compensation one-stop shop. This partnership established a single phone number (1300 362 128) and website ([www.worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au)) for Queenslanders to access the services of WorkCover, Workplace Health and Safety, the Electrical Safety Office, and the Workers' Compensation Regulator.

All Queensland businesses, including small businesses, now have a single point of contact to raise queries with any of these entities, report incidents, and make claims.

This partnership also assists the government to communicate with small business regarding workplace health and safe issues. When businesses contact WorkCover via the Worksafe website they are also presented with safety and injury prevention information, alerts, and events. Opportunities to further capitalise on this new proactive relationship are being expanded throughout 2015. Some of the initiatives in planning include:

- Developing a permanent small business presence on the homepage slider.
- Developing a new [URL](#) that redirects relevant enquiries directly to the small business landing page.

The government's [business and industry portal](#) is specifically aimed at new businesses or those thinking of starting a business. . It contains information on establishing, running and growing a business and also serves as a gateway to the Queensland WorkSafe website for more specialised safety and compensation information and services.