

Statement from a spokesperson from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Compliance and enforcement activity

The Coroner's inquest is due to consider, amongst other matters relating to the Dreamworld tragedy, the regulatory environment of amusement park rides in sittings in October and November this year. The Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) has fully cooperated with the Coroner's Inquest and will continue to do so.

As part of the Coroner's Inquest proceedings, OIR provided the Coroner with information about its compliance and enforcement activity (including assessments, investigations and site visits) with the theme parks including Dreamworld from 2002 and in the years following the tragedy. OIR can confirm that WHSQ had been attending Dreamworld on a regular basis during this period.

Amusement ride owners are responsible for ensuring the safety of every ride they operate and most importantly the safety of members of the public who ride on them. Every amusement ride in Queensland is subject to an annual inspection and registration process. The annual inspection must be carried out by a registered professional engineer engaged by the ride owner.

Following the Dreamworld tragedy, there has also been a significant increase in WHSQ compliance and enforcement activities regarding the amusement ride and theme park industries. Since the Dreamworld tragedy in 2016, WHSQ has completed 1,045 assessments of amusement devices at major shows, carnivals and theme parks, including two extensive audits of the Queensland's six major theme parks in late 2016 and late 2017. During these audits, 45 statutory notices were issued.

It would be inappropriate to comment further while these issues are under consideration by the Coroner.

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

All registered amusement devices (which included the Thunder River Rapids Ride) are subject to a number of requirements under the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*. The requirements on the ride's owner include an annual inspection of the ride by a registered professional engineer; regular maintenance, inspection and testing; and annual registration with WHSQ.

Proposed Regulation changes regarding amusement rides and theme parks

The Best Practice Review of Workplace Health and Safety Queensland was commissioned after the Dreamworld and Eagle Farm tragedies. The review and its recommendations were handed down in July 2017. Since then, the Government has introduced legislative changes including industrial manslaughter provisions and announced its intention to introduce new regulations to improve safety in the amusement ride industry. This includes proposals for:

- Mandatory requirements for ride operators to be fully-trained and competent
- Mandatory major inspections of all amusement and theme park rides
- Major theme parks to develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated safety management system
- Additional record keeping through detailed log books.

The Queensland Government is also considering the development of a Code of Practice, which would set descriptive minimum standards to sit under the new regulations. The Code of Practice would

incorporate key aspects such training delivery, identification cards for ride operators, and publicly displayed certificates on rides. The changes proposed by the Government will go beyond existing nationally harmonized laws.

The Coroner investigating the Dreamworld tragedy has been provided with a draft copy of the regulations.

These important changes to amusement ride and theme park safety are expected to be in place by the end of the year, or as soon as practically possible. The Government will act swiftly to implement any recommendations from the Coronial Inquest once they have been handed down.

OIR understands the details regarding the construction, maintenance, safety measures, staffing, history and modifications of the Thunder River Rapids Ride will be subject to the Coronial Inquest.

Workplace Health and Safety Inspectors

All WHSQ inspectors undergo induction training to assist them to respond to a wide range of hazards across all workplaces. WHSQ also has a number of qualified technical experts, including mechanical and chemical engineers that provide specialist advice to inspectors and assist in audits and investigations as required. WHSQ has an specialist engineering group, headed by a qualified engineer with international expertise in amusement rides. The specialist engineering group provide support and expert technical advice on amusement rides and other complex plant and equipment used in Queensland workplaces to inspectors. OIR is currently considering further measures to make the amusement ride industry safer, by employing specialist amusement ride inspectors.