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## **TREBLING OF PENALTIES FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY BREACHES**

Corporations soon face radically tougher penalties for workplace safety breaches in South Australia after the State Government's *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare (Penalties) Amendment Bill* passed through Parliament.

Industrial Relations Minister Michael Wright says the Rann Government is committed to making South Australian workplaces safer.

“This legislation complements our wide range of workplace health and safety initiatives by trebling the maximum penalties for corporate offenders and the public sector to \$300,000 for a first offence and \$600,000 for any subsequent workplace safety breaches,” he said.

“We want big businesses and the public sector to know that they will face significant penalties if their workplace safety measures aren't up to scratch.

“Any workplace death or injury is one too many.

“This Bill also includes a new offence of reckless endangerment.

“It will apply to any person or business that demonstrates a conscious or reckless disregard for workplace safety that creates a substantial risk of death or serious harm to others.

“The reckless endangerment provision can attract fines of up to \$1.2 million for corporations and public sector agencies while individuals face a maximum fine of \$400,000 or imprisonment of up to 5 years.

“I am hopeful this new legislation will take effect early in 2008.

“It will be enforced by the State Government's occupational health, safety and welfare regulator SafeWork SA and its inspectors,” said Mr Wright.

The legislation is part of the State Government's commitment to the South Australian Strategic Plan, which includes a target of reducing workplace injuries by 40 per cent by the year 2012.