

# Australia: Concerns that unsafe conditions killed 2 Queensland building workers

Our correspondents  
11 December 2025

Some, still scant, details are emerging about the conditions that led to the deaths of two much-loved Queensland construction workers, and serious injuries to another, within 24 hours earlier this month.

Family members and building workers are raising concerns about the reported lack of safety precautions involved. They are demanding action to halt the rising toll of deaths and injuries caused by corporate profit-driven speed-ups and disregard for workers' lives throughout the construction industry.

In the first tragedy, Beau Bradford, a young concreter, just 15-years-old, died on December 1 when he was struck by what government authorities and media reports vaguely described as "a large object" that fell from the boom of a concrete pump truck. This fatal event, which was labelled a "freak accident" before any investigation began, occurred at a building site in Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast, south of Brisbane, the Queensland state capital.

No details have been released to inform building workers and the public. But it has now been reported on social media that a piece of heavy equipment malfunctioned, sending a large component crashing down from the concrete pump truck's boom. Why and how this happened and why the teenager was exposed to this danger has not been explained.

According to other media reports, Bradford's mother, Amanda Dalrymple, has called for stronger safety rules around heavy machinery on job sites to prevent similar tragedies, and the incident has sparked wider concerns about the safety of young workers in high-risk industries.

Nevertheless, it reportedly remains legal in Australia for young workers to be employed on construction sites, supposedly under certain conditions, despite the obvious need for stringent oversight and hazard

management to ensure their safety.

On December 2, just 24 hours after Bradford's death, Kimura Dixon, 45, a father of eight, died when a retaining wall collapsed on an apartment block site at West End in inner Brisbane. His stepson Rama, only 19, was trapped under the rubble for about 90 minutes before he was freed and taken to hospital with serious injuries to his legs and chest.

Reportedly, it was their first day of working on the site, a Queensland government-funded social housing project.

It has now been revealed that workers had three weeks earlier raised safety concerns about the stability of the retaining wall and walked off the job, refusing to work under the potentially deadly conditions. Online messages showed that staff expressed their concerns to the construction company.

At least one worker on the site reported that they could see the retaining wall moving. Multiple workers expressed concerns regarding the overall stability of the wall and then refused to work on the site.

Both deaths have caused immense grief. Tributes have poured in from family, friends and the construction workers, together with donations to online fundraisers to pay for funeral and other expenses. Bradford's family honoured the teenager's wish to donate his organs so that other lives could potentially be saved. Dixon's family raised funds to help take his body back to his native New Zealand.

In several social posts, Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU) officials paid tribute to the two workers and said no project was worth the loss of a worker's life. But the union is working with state government workplace safety agencies that are investigating the deaths.

Such inquiries usually take years and then cover up

the underlying causes and responsibilities for workers' deaths. None have led to any lessening of the toll. In Queensland alone, there has been a series of deaths on building sites in the past 18 months. Across the country, the past two years have seen 82 deaths in the construction industry.

Official investigations invariably cover over the driving forces of dangerous working conditions under capitalism—the systemic subordination of workers' health and lives to the interests of corporate profit, including through speed-up, subcontracting and casualisation.

Responding to the two latest tragedies, **Bryan**, a Brisbane building worker, told the *World Socialist Web Site*: “My main concern is that many of the builders and developers are not only pushing for unsafe levels of production, they're also hiring site managers that are not suitable or genuinely qualified to manage a project safely and efficiently. This all comes at the cost of the worker.

“Safety concerns are often received as personal attacks and incidents are not looked at in a systematic manner where we learn and improve. This will continue to get worse unless more workers are willing to speak up and our unions back these workers as much as possible.”

Bryan said workers felt they would be sacked if they spoke up. “It's a toxic industry and this mentality of speak up, lose your job needs to stop.”

He concluded: “No government should ever get in the way of workers being represented and kept safe. I genuinely believe these deaths would have been prevented if the regulator had more safety officers that were given the power and backing they deserve to do their jobs correctly.

“The same goes for union officials that have been stripped of their rights to enter a site without notice. The government and these rich developers causing a race to the bottom have blood on their hands.”

Bryan's comments reference the fact that even minimal safety protections are being thrown overboard to cut costs and maximise profits, and that this has been taken to a new level since August 2024, when the federal Labor government anti-democratically placed the CFMEU construction division under the control of a government-installed administrator.

Backed by the employers and the corporate media,

Labor has carried this out under the pretext of combatting corruption allegations against union officials. But the real targets of the dictatorial takeover are rank-and-file building workers, a historically militant section of the working class.

A longtime construction worker, **Gino**, told the WSWS: “To put it simply, the death and injury should never have occurred. It's obvious that safety has been cut significantly... As long as everything is driven by corporate dollars, and this includes our government and politicians of all particular ideologies, nothing will change.”

Gino said companies and their managers must be held to account. “I don't just mean a slap on the hand or a paltry fine. At the moment, you will find the buck will stop at the supervisor on site if anything. This is not stopping the rot, and the same thing will happen elsewhere on another work site.”

Workplace deaths and serious injuries are on the rise globally, as corporations cut costs and impose productivity increases to satisfy the demands of their financial backers. In Australia, the recent deaths of a young worker at the Port Kembla steelworks and of two mineworkers in the Cobar tragedy are typical.

To halt this carnage, workers must take matters into their own hands. Rank-and-file committees, independent of the union bureaucracies, must be established in workplaces everywhere to assess site conditions, investigate deaths and injuries, formulate demands and enforce safety measures, including through strike action.

Above all, the growing tide of casualties shows the necessity to overturn capitalism and fight for socialism, which includes placing the construction industry, along with the banks and major corporations, under public ownership and democratic workers' control.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**