



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON NICK SHERRY

Minister for Small Business
Minister Assisting on Deregulation
Minister Assisting on Tourism

20,000 CALLS - SUPPORT LINE A HIT WITH SMALL BUSINESS

The Australian Government's Small Business Support Line has been a huge success with small businesses – taking its 20,000th call late yesterday just after its first birthday.

Small Business Minister, Senator Nick Sherry, said today the support line had been warmly embraced by the sector since its launch in September last year.

“It is essentially a one-stop shop for small businesses wanting initial help on issues such as cash-flow management, retail leasing, obtaining finance, marketing, and even stress and hardship counselling,” Senator Sherry said.

“Almost 60 per cent of the calls taken by the support line are from people who want to start a retail business.”

“These are followed by inquiries from professional, scientific and technical services, the construction, health and community sectors, and accommodation and food services.”

“It is encouraging to hear that 90 per cent of the calls are resolved by the support line agent. Only 10 per cent are referred to a third party.”

“Australia has weathered the global recession in a much better position than virtually all other developed economies, but we understand many small businesses are still doing it tough and the Gillard Government will continue to provide and expand support services for small businesses,” Senator Sherry said.

The support line works with the Australian Tax Office, Business Enterprise Centres and state and territory governments to ensure small businesses are receiving relevant and up to date information on small business programs and initiatives.

“We want to make it easier for small businesses to navigate their way through the various Commonwealth, state and territory small business programs.”

“The support line has certainly met its objectives. It gives those time-poor businesses – be it in the big cities or in regional Australia – an opportunity to obtain advice,” Senator Sherry said.

For information on the Small Business Support Line call 1800 777 275 or email sbsl@innovation.gov.au

CANBERRA

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