



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR NICK SHERRY

Minister for Small Business
Minister Assisting on Deregulation and
Public Sector Superannuation
Minister Assisting on Tourism
Senator for Tasmania

SID SIDEBOTTOM MP

Federal Member for Braddon

PRAISE FOR 'RESILIENT, CREATIVE' LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES

Small business operators in North West Tasmania have been praised for their resilience and creativity at a Small Business Roundtable in Latrobe today.

Small Business Minister and Labor Senator for Tasmania, Nick Sherry, and Federal Member for Braddon, Sid Sidebottom PM, hosted the roundtable, organised by the O Group, a statewide business, employment and training provider, to discuss issues facing small business nationally and in the region.

“Events like today's are important because they provide small business a face-to-face opportunity to engage directly with the Australian Government on issues affecting them and their industry sectors,” Senator Sherry said.

Participants also heard from Dr Michael Schaper, Deputy Chair, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and Mr Graham Marshall from the O Group.

“Our regional small businesses are innovative and dynamic – as shown by their overwhelming response to the North West and Northern Tasmania Innovation and Investment Fund,” Senator Sherry said.

“The take-up means the \$17 million joint investment by the Australian and Tasmanian Government will be leveraged into more than \$35 million worth of investment in productive capacity across the region – and more than 400 jobs.

“The Australian Government recognises small business is vital to regional economies right across Australia.

“After all, the country's 2 million small businesses are responsible for 48 per cent of national employment,” Senator Sherry said.

Mr Sidebottom, who chaired the roundtable, said the event also allowed the government to talk directly with small business about the services and initiatives it offered.

“The North West and Northern Tasmania fund is a great example of how the Australian Government works closely with its state counterparts to address challenges in the regional economy,” Mr Sidebottom said.

“The fact it will create new capacity and more than 400 jobs for Tasmanians is a great outcome.

“I want to congratulate the O Group for its on-going commitment to supporting business through its advisory and training services in the region and across the state.”

“Small businesses are at the heart of building a dynamic and flexible regional economy, it is important they are kept informed of the support that is available to them,” Mr Sidebottom said.

Minister Sherry was pleased with the range of issues raised by local small business people and he also took the opportunity to ask for their input into the Australian Government’s business to business dispute resolution options paper. The Minister released the options paper yesterday and submissions close 30 June 2011.

Participants were also given USB flash drives containing the Small Business Resource Kit, the latest tool for new and growing small businesses developed by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

LATROBE

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