



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR THE HON NICK SHERRY

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

TALKS WITH BOOK RETAILING INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES

The Minister for Small Business, Senator Nick Sherry, has met with representatives of the Australian book retailing industry in Canberra today describing the talks as constructive and a good opportunity to clear the air.

“There’s been widespread and robust debate on my comment last week about the future of bookshops in the digital and online age,” Senator Sherry said.

“I made an observation on where the world of retailing is heading and the need to prepare for it.

“I welcome the debate as necessary at a time when the industry itself recognises it is on a cusp of great change.

“I congratulate the bookselling industry for preparing a strategy to adjust and the many bookshops that are being pro-active by building their capacity to sell online, to sell E-Books and to diversify.

“Those bookstores that meet the challenges of offering services and value-added experiences the online environment can’t provide will survive and thrive – these are the exceptions I referred to in my original comment.

“These are just some of the facts: Almost 1.2 million media tablet units will ship to Australia in 2011.

“Australian sales of media tablets in the first five months of this year have already exceeded last year’s sales of 326,000.

“Already more than 8 million Australians shop online.

“The Government recognises the challenges and has taken steps to facilitate adjustment to the new business environment.

“The Government established a Book Industry Strategy Group in April 2010 – it is due to deliver its final report with its recommendations to Minister for Innovation and Industry, Senator Kim Carr, this year.

“Of course, today Australia has taken another significant step towards super-fast broadband through the National Broadband Network.

“The NBN will provide the Australian book industry and other retailers the necessary tools to allow them to use their ingenuity, creativity and business acumen to compete in the global economy – whether they’re based in regional Australia or in the capital cities,” Senator Sherry said.

CANBERRA

23 June 2011

Media contact: Joe Scavo, Minister’s office, 0413 800 757