



MEDIA RELEASE

SENATOR NICK SHERRY

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

SID SIDEBOTTOM MP

Federal Member for Braddon

REBECCA WHITE MP

Tasmanian Parliamentary
Secretary for Small Business



GOVERNMENTS CONSULT BURNIE SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

North West business owners have met Federal and State Government representatives at a Small Business Roundtable in Burnie today.

Federal Small Business Minister and North West-based Labor Senator Nick Sherry hosted today's roundtable. The meeting was chaired by Member for Braddon, Sid Sidebottom MP, with the Tasmanian Government represented by Rebecca White MP, the Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business.

"The Australian Government is a strong believer in meeting local business owners and getting business owners to connect with government services," said Senator Sherry.

"I always enjoy getting feedback from the coalface and I appreciate small business people having strong views.

"I hope the local businesses here in my home area were able to gain an insight into the services the Australian Government provides and our positive plans for the Tasmanian and national economies.

"The previous Small Business Roundtable in Latrobe gave us a first hand look at how Tasmanian businesses were using Australian Government funding initiatives to create positive change," Senator Sherry said.

Mr Sidebottom provided an update on Federal Government initiatives such as the *North West and Northern Tasmania Innovation and Investment Fund*. The NWNTIIF provided \$17 million of support to Tasmanian businesses to enhance employment, business and economic opportunities.

Since the announcement of the NWNTIIF, an additional \$8 million has been provided to Tasmanian businesses through the *Tasmanian Innovation and Investment Fund* to help them adapt to the dynamic economic environment.

"The Australian Government has placed Tasmanian small businesses in the spotlight," Mr Sidebottom said.

"Many of our local businesses are now transitioning to a more sustainable future and it's important for business owners to be aware of the government support available."

Ms White outlined State Government initiatives at the Roundtable.

"There are many avenues of support for small businesses. This Roundtable will help business owners connect to the services most relevant to them," Ms White said.

The Roundtable was facilitated by the Braddon Business Centre, part of the network of Business Enterprise Centres (BECs). BEC's provide a range of services to businesses Australia-wide including training courses, referral services, workshops, seminars, and mentoring.

"The Tasmanian Government provides \$880,000 in funds to eight Enterprise Centres across the state a year and one of these is the Braddon Business Centre," Ms White said

The Australian Government provided Braddon Business Centre with \$187,000 in Small Business Advisory Services funding to help small business weather the Global Financial Crisis and \$55,000 for the Small Business Online program assist small businesses get online.

Nationally, the Australian Government funds 37 BECs under the \$48.25 million Small Business Advisory Services program which began operating in July 2008.

"More than 160,000 small businesses have taken the opportunity to seek the free or low-cost expert advice provided by the BECs during the past three years," Senator Sherry said.

"It's one way the Australian Government is ensuring small business people have the advice they need to run and grow a successful business."

Further information about Business Enterprise Centres is available at <http://www.becaustrialia.org.au/>.

BURNIE

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