

MEDIA RELEASE
Friday, 17 July

TAX, COMPETITION AND INVESTMENT IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP STILL KEY TO SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH

2015 VODAFONE NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS SUMMIT WRAP-UP

Australian business and political leaders all agree, our two million small businesses are the backbone of our economy; they are the largest employer group and have a major influence on the economy.

The audience at the Vodafone National Small Business Summit held in Sydney this week, heard that there is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to further reforms on tax, implementation of the Competition Policy Review and continuing to build an environment in which small businesses can thrive, innovate and do business easily.

International growth and investment for small businesses was a major theme at the Summit, with encouragement given from industry and government to enter the Asian market and leverage this opportunity.

The Council of Small Business Australia (COSBOA), who earlier this year celebrated the positive changes in the budget, stated that they will continue to work with government, business leaders and ministers on improving legislation and the environment for small businesses.

Empowering small business in NSW

In his address on Local Economic Development, The Hon. John Barilaro, Minister for Small Business, talked about the passion in the sector, the need to empower regional NSW and the investment required in young entrepreneurs to be our future business leaders.

Mr Barilaro's belief is that the budget has brought confidence back into the small business community, however there is still a requirement for small business to apply pressure on the government. "Small business people have the voice, power and collective that can change the way government responds", stated Mr Barilaro.

In closing, Mr Barilaro declared his commitment, "I don't want small businesses to survive; I want them to thrive."

Your experience matters with the ATO

Chris Jordan, Commissioner at the ATO told the audience they had gone far and wide this year to listen and learn from small businesses. "You told us to fix the basics and make it easy - especially with our website and the dense documentation - to understand your circumstances and tailor services; to help you with complexity."

"You matter and the ATO are committed to providing a better experience for small businesses" declared Mr Jordan.

The initiatives taken by the ATO include cleaning up the website, updating the search function and implementing a whole new look and feel including a specific section dedicated to business. The applications are being improved; new online resources are being developed and ATO Small Business Contacts have been established in each region.

“We need your ideas and your feedback to make things better for small business. Keep working with us as this is the only way we will get this right - together,” concluded Mr Jordan.

Big and small business debate the Competition Policy Review

The debate about the fairness and effectiveness of Harper’s Competition Policy Review continued, and although small and big business agreed on the majority of the 56 recommendations from Harper’s review, they strongly disagreed on Section 46 and the ‘effects test’ that governs the misuse of market power.

Speaking on behalf of the Council of Small Business Australia, CEO, Peter Strong commented: “Any business that is afraid of the effects test must have a very fragile business plan. We fully support all aspects of the Competition Policy Review and continue to recommend implementation of Section 46 to the government and on behalf of small business.”

The consensus from the panel was that a competitive market delivers innovation, flexibility and customer choice, and is the most efficient way for the economy to operate. Reform is needed to allow swift action for the misuse of market power.

The Hon. Bill Shorten MP addresses small business leaders

Speaking at the Summit dinner The Hon. Bill Shorten MP, reconfirmed Labor’s understanding that to build prosperity and growth in the economy it is dependent upon the success of Australia’s 2 million small businesses. “I took on this portfolio responsibility because I believe that Labor can do more for small business – and we can do more with small business. We will do more to help you grow, to innovate and thrive.” said Mr Shorten.

In his speech The Hon. Bill Shorten covered economic policy, taxation, red tape, the budget, innovation and the effects of these on small business.

Concluding, Mr Shorten commented, “Under my leadership, Labor will always be open to business. We will always be ready to work together with you to deliver the best outcomes for our country. For employers and employees, families and communities. Because when small business succeeds, Australia succeeds. Let us make that shared success our common goal – and our compass in the years ahead.”

Mental health advocate COSBOA Small Business Champion

The founder of Billie Goat Soap, Leanne Faulkner, was named the 2015 **COSBOA Small Business Champion** at the **Vodafone National Small Business Summit** by Paul Nielsen, Director & Chair of the Council of Small Business Australia (COSBOA). The Australian entrepreneur was awarded in recognition for her contribution towards highlighting the importance of mental health in small business owners.

Mr Nielsen said when awarding Ms Faulkner; “this year in line with the Summit’s theme for passion and people; we have chosen a winner that is truly extraordinary. She has built a

small business from the ground up experiencing both the highs and the lows of what that entails, and made a huge difference to business people everywhere; Leanne very much deserves this recognition.”

For more information visit: www.nationalsmallbusinesssummit.com.au

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Notes to Editors

1. The Council of Small Business Australia (COSBOA) was founded in 1977 and was incorporated in 1979.
2. COSBOA is Australia’s peak body exclusively representing the interests of small businesses.
3. The VODAFONE National Small Business Summit 2015 will be held at Doltone House Jones Bay Wharf, Sydney on 16 and 17 July.
4. The VODAFONE National Small Business provides the small business sector with the opportunity to discuss and identify relevant issues, promote innovation and generate ideas to stimulate growth within the industry.
5. For more information about the summit visit: www.nationalsmallbusinesssummit.com.au
6. For more information on COSBOA visit: <http://www.cosboa.org.au/>
7. Interviews with Peter Strong, CEO are available upon request.
8. Connect through social media channels:

Facebook: [/COSBOA](https://www.facebook.com/COSBOA)
Twitter: [@COSBOA](https://twitter.com/COSBOA)

Hashtag: [#NSBS15](https://twitter.com/hashtag/NSBS15)

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/cosboa>
9. COSBOA is a long-time advocate of small business on issues from taxation and workplace relations, through to competition law and retail tenancy.
10. The goals of COSBOA are to promote and support the development of small businesses in Australia and the council recognises that it is a national imperative for Australia that the needs of small business are on the national policy agenda.