

PRESS RELEASE

3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015

**FEDERAL SMALL BUSINESS MINISTER SET TO OPEN VODAFONE NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS SUMMIT START UP**

Hon Bruce Billson MP will join the Council of Small Business of Australia (COSBOA) to put the individuals behind small businesses in the spotlight ahead of its annual policy event, the Vodafone National Small Business Summit in July.

The inaugural **Summit Start Up** will be opened by Hon Bruce Billson, the Federal Small Business Minister on the evening of Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July; where the community, culture, and diversity of small businesses will be celebrated.

All individual business owners are invited to join the Summit Start Up, to network with their peers, showcase their entrepreneurial force and meet with key leaders and policy influencers and makers.

During the evening, attendees can hear commentary from various sectors – from accountants and gym owners, to mechanics and hair dressers – about what role they play in the community and how this impacts the public's welfare.

Minister Billson said: "I am delighted to join small business owners and representatives at the inaugural Start Up to COSBOA's Summit. Our Government knows the hard working women and men of small business really are the engine room of our economy. Small business has been and continues to be an enduring focus and priority for me, both professionally and personally."

Peter Strong, CEO of COSBOA, added: "Small business is vital to the Australian economy, although whilst we sometimes get caught up discussing the financial impacts of small business; it's important not to lose sight and be aware of their contributions to communities and the cultural fabric on a daily basis – whether that's the local cafe owner, who knows you on a first name basis, or local hairdresser, who stays open to work around your calendar."

Peter Strong and the Minister will also be joined by Andrew Chanmugam, Vodafone's General Manager of Business, and Robert Gerrish founder of Flying Solo, home to a community of over 75,000 Australian solo and micro businesses, sharing their advice and learning with owners.

COSBOA is also pleased to announce Westpac is a major sponsor for this year's Summit. General Manager for Small Business, Julie Rynski, adds: "Small business is the backbone of the Australian economy, and Westpac is excited to be involved in an event celebrating the success of Australia's small business owners and entrepreneurs."

"As a major sponsor of the inaugural Small Business Summit Start Up, we look forward to advancing the conversation around small business community and culture, which is vital to the continued strength of the small business sector and Australian economy as a whole."

Tickets for the **Small Business Summit Start Up** on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July are \$20 per person. Full Summit registration for the Vodafone National Small Business Summit is now also open. For more information please visit [www.nationalsmallbusinesssummit.com.au](http://www.nationalsmallbusinesssummit.com.au)

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**Notes to Editors**

1. The Council of Small Business Australia (COSBOA) was founded in 1979 and was incorporated in 1985.
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](http://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.