

Small Business Reference Group Communique

Members of the NSW Small Business Reference Group (SBRG) participated in the inaugural meeting on 22 April 2024.

The SBRG supports the NSW Small Business Commissioner (the Commissioner) in identifying the key issues, challenges and experiences faced by small businesses across NSW.

The contributions and experience of SBRG members will provide valuable insight said NSW Small Business Commissioner Mr Chris Lamont.

A key focus of SBRG members was the Commissioner's upcoming Review of small business experiences with regulatory policy-making.

SBRG members noted survey research indicating a significant increase in small business concerns about the burden of 'red tape'. The SBRG also discussed:

- Existing business conditions and pressures facing small business.
- Opportunities to consider small business perspectives earlier during policy development to improve the design of policy options.
- Adequacy of consultation practices the potential for Small Business Impact Statements to improve regulatory outcomes for small business.
- Actions that could be taken to improve the NSW regulatory policy framework.

"Policy and regulatory solutions for the sector are improved and unsurprisingly more appropriate when directly informed and tested with the target audience hence the importance of the SBRG," said Chris Lamont.

"We feel privileged to provide a voice for small business having been in the manufacturing and trade industry for over 20 years. The SBRG is a unique and important opportunity to bring to the table real scenarios that a small business owner encounters on a day-to-day basis. The issues that we face in Regional NSW can often differ from our metropolitan counterparts, however we all agree that improvements need to be made to relieve pressure surrounding red tape, rising costs, and the genuine need for skilled workers in the bush." - **Jenny Raffin, Almighty Industries**

"This reference group has a lot of important work ahead. We know small businesses are suffering from increasing redtape and compliance costs - and this forum allows us industry to identify specific pain points that government must address to make life easier not harder for the 850,000 small businesses in NSW." - **Luke Achterstraat, Council of Small Business Organisations Australia**

"Behind every regulation is a small business wondering if this is their breaking point. We need to work with local businesses if we want growth in NSW - we need to think green lights over red tape." - **Kylie Yates, Civil Contractors Federation NSW**

Members of the SBRG:

- Luke Achterstraat - CEO, Council of Small Business Organisations Australia
- David Mumford - Director, RBK Nutraceuticals
- Yasmin Coe - Founder, Sweet Pea & Poppy
- Todd & Jenny Raffin - Owners, Almighty Industries
- Mark McKenzie - CEO, Australian Convenience & Petroleum Marketers Association
- Tim Burt - Director, Future Skills Organisation
- Kylie Yates - CEO, Civil Contractors Federation NSW
- David Bare - NSW Director, Housing Industry Association
- Amanda Gould - Director, Real Estate Institute of NSW