



23 May 2014

Manager
Small Business Ombudsman and Procurement Unit
Small Business, Competition and Consumer Policy Division
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

By email: small.business@treasury.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: The Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

The NSW Business Chamber (“the Chamber”) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Small business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman Discussion Paper.

As you may be aware, the Chamber is one of Australia’s largest business support groups, with a direct membership of more than 16,000 businesses, providing services to over 30,000 businesses each year. Tracing its heritage back to the Sydney Chamber of Commerce established in 1825, the Chamber works with thousands of businesses ranging in size from owner operators to large corporations, and spanning all industry sectors from product-based manufacturers to service provider enterprises.

The Chamber is a leading business solutions provider and advocacy group with strengths in workplace management, work health and safety, industrial relations, human resources, international trade and business performance consulting.

Operating throughout a network of offices in metropolitan and regional NSW, the Chamber represents the needs of business at a local, regional, state and federal level, advocating on behalf of its members to create a better environment for industry.

There are more than 2 million small businesses in Australia, employing more than 7 million people. That’s why, together with other state chambers of commerce and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the NSW Business Chamber launched the 2013 pre-election campaign: **Small Business Too Big To Ignore** to give voice to small business and to make sure that the views of this vital sector of our economy are heard loud and clear by decision makers across the country.

Central to our campaign were our 4 policy pillars, **The Big 4 you can’t ignore** which called on the next government to:

1. Cut down on Red tape
2. Simplify the Tax System
3. Make it easier to employ people

NSW Business Chamber
incorporates

- Sydney Business Chamber
- Australian Business Lawyers & Advisors
- Australian Business Recruitment Solutions
- Australian Business Consulting & Solutions
- Australian Business Apprenticeships Centre
- Australian Business Training Solutions
- Australian Business Defence Industry Unit
- Australian Business Industrial

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4. Build better infrastructure

We saw that to deliver on these policy initiatives the role of the Australian Small Business Commissioner would need to change – with additional powers and responsibilities to ensure the office could more actively contribute to reducing red tape, assist in the resolution of disputes and, perhaps most importantly, advocate for the needs of small business.

The Chamber is pleased to see that the discussion paper proposes to provide a number of new services and powers to the Commissioner including a dispute resolution service, an ability to participate in the regulation impact process and powers to investigate complaints about government and private sector practices that are adversely affecting small business.

The Chamber is however concerned with the proposed change in name of the Australian Small Business Commissioner to the Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman. While the change to the title of ombudsman might better reflect the broader range of functions it is proposed to now provide the Commissioner, the Chamber believes that such a change would only serve to confuse businesses who are now actively engaged with state based Small Business Commissioners. Accordingly we would strongly encourage that the title be changed to the *Australian Small Business Commissioner and Ombudsman* to retain greater consistency.

If you require more information regarding our submission, please contact Luke Aitken, Senior Manager Policy on (02) 9458 7582 or luke.aitken@nswbc.com.au .

Yours sincerely



For Paul Orton

Director, Policy and Advocacy