



Combined Small Business Alliance of Western Australia Inc. (CoSBA)

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NEXT MEETING: SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

5.30pm, THURSDAY 16 JULY 2009

CITY of MELVILLE OFFICES, 10 Almondbury Road, BOORAGOON

IN THIS ISSUE:

WA IR System review

Economy defies doomsayers

IR changes herald challenges and new cost pressures

Perth house prices rise \$15,000

'One-stop shop' building regulator

Tougher Penalties for Unlicensed Drivers Could Cost your Business

Unions to push for 15pc super contribution

Business lending up 4% in May

Business conditions jump to 9-month high

Unionist threatened contractor

Stop scaring us silly

WA job applications up 6% in June

Shoppers to power WA out of recession: CCI

Unions must change with times or they face extinction

ATTACHMENTS:

CORRESPONDENCE.PDF

WA IR SYSTEM REVIEW.PDF

SBA AWARDS.pdf

SBA NEWSLETTER.pdf

Labor breaks key small business promise.pdf



WA IR System review

Readers may recall that in *The CoSBA BROADCAST* of 4 June 2009, under the heading of 'WA appoints Amendola to review IR system' we published an extract from *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, of 1.6.09, concerning the review of the WA IR system. Following, Oliver Moon, representing CoSBA was invited to meet with Steven Amendola on 8 July 2009 to discuss issues with the WA IR system that are outlined in the attachment: WA IR SYSTEM REVIEW.PDF

Economy defies doomsayers

AUSTRALIA has strengthened its claim to be the strongest advanced economy, with the jobs market holding up much better in the face of the global downturn than either the government or private sector economists were expecting.

DISCLAIMER: The information appearing in *The CoSBA BROADCAST* is for affiliates of the Combined Small Business Alliance of WA (CoSBA). The information is sourced from various sources including public records. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the probity of the information, CoSBA accepts no liability for accuracy, errors or omissions, or for any injury to any user of the information.

The number of people looking for work increased by only 7400 last month to 5.8 per cent of the workforce, while the number of people in jobs has fallen by only 0.5 per cent since the financial crisis struck late last year. The downturn is being softened by the strength of the retail sector and by increasing recruitment in the public sector. And there is evidence companies are holding on to staff because of fears they will again be facing labour shortages if the recovery gathers steam next year.

Julia Gillard said part-time employment was now at a record 3.2 million. "This increase in part-time employment is a sign employers are doing everything they can to hold on to their staff in the global recession by reducing their hours rather than laying them off," the Acting Prime Minister said. Ms Gillard contrasted Australia's unemployment rate of 5.8 per cent with the 9.5 per cent rate in the US and Europe, 8.4 per cent in Canada and 7.2 per cent in Britain. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 10.7.09)

IR changes herald challenges and new cost pressures

THE life of employers has suddenly got a whole lot more complicated. That is the view of many in the industrial relations sector as business starts dealing with the new legislation and bureaucracy of Fair Work Australia. The sweeping changes, yet another set that have swept IR over the past decade or so, will require much more of business in terms of record keeping and monitoring of a host of new rules that either came in last week or will arrive in six months time with new awards.

The key changes are: the reintroduction of unfair dismissal rules with significantly more onus on the employer with very limited exemption; the return of collective bargaining and the strong hand dealt to unions; and new awards from January 1, which are meant to modernise working arrangements, underpinned by 10 National Employment Standards.

Already fatigued by a long march of regulatory changes, including the GST and a never-ending rise of red tape, business is bracing itself for another long period of challenges as business and employees come to grips with the rule changes and unions attempt to reassert the authority they have lost over the past two decades.

Almost everyone on the employer side of the equation has a tale to tell. These are not anecdotes about workplace events in the past week but simply scenarios they can see playing out from myriad new rules they claim will make employing people more challenging than any time in the recent past.

"This is a revamped IR system from the late 1980s," said Master Builders Association construction director Kim Richardson, an experienced player in the toughest IR environment around, the building game. Like many at industry advocacy level, Mr Richardson concedes that some of the changes the Labor federal government has brought in were well intentioned. But even there, Mr Richardson fears the outcome is vastly different from the policy.

The Australian Mines and Metals Association underscores this issue. The industry group is one that is concerned about the implications for the economy if unions seek to test the scope of new laws and, in case of more militant unions, what they can get away with.

The Council of Small Business of Australia has claimed that the government reneged on its agreement to exclude small business by changing just one word in the procedures. What previously read as "may be required" now reads as "will be required to provide evidence of compliance with the Code if the employee makes a claim for unfair dismissal to Fair Work Australia, including evidence that a warning has been given (except in cases of summary dismissal). The council's CEO, Jaye Radisich, accused the government of acting with extreme dishonour.

"The one word that has been covertly changed in the code after months of consultation and negotiation, will cause a significant red-tape and procedural burden to small businesses - ultimately causing a real dollar cost," Ms Radisich said in a statement. "Small business owners are fair and reasonable people. They are willing to work within whatever system they're confronted with, but they will not react well to the wool being pulled over their eyes."

Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA workplace relations director Marcia Kuhne said the government had lost credibility in the way it had made last-minute changes to the exemption for small business. "That is quite mischievous by the government, it is not very honest," Ms Kuhne said. The chamber's IR expert believes that, even without the last-minute changes, the unfair dismissal laws will cause significant problems for business. One issue is that the onus of responsibility has significantly shifted to the employer when it comes to facing claims from former employees.

UnionsWA acting secretary Simone McGurk believes employers may be overstating the impact of the new laws. Ms McGurk said the laws were not markedly different from what was there before WorkChoices era. She said she did not believe unions had gained unprecedented power in the workplace, denying that union involvement as the default representative of employees in the collective bargaining process was a significant change. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, 9.7.09)

Perth house prices rise \$15,000

The median house price in Perth has risen by 3.5 per cent, or \$15,000, in the June quarter as more owners traded up to more expensive homes while the rental market's vacancy rate is now higher than normal, new data shows. Preliminary figures from the Real Estate Institute of WA (REIWA) shows the city's median house price has risen from \$430,000 recorded in the March quarter to \$445,000.

REIWA president Rob Druitt said the median price had recovered nearly all of its fall in the second half of calendar 2008, with the current price just under the \$448,000 figure recorded in the last year's June quarter. "It may well be the case that the preliminary median of \$445,000 is exceeded once all settled sales data is received over the next few months," Mr Druitt said.

He added that the growth trend in the residential market was being aided by a return of the trade-up buyers. "Much of the recovery in the median house price over the last six months can be attributed to increasing trade-up activity, and this is reflected in the distribution of sales tending towards more expensive properties," Mr Druitt said. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 10.7.09)

'One-stop shop' building regulator

Commerce Minister Troy Buswell launched the Building Commission on Wed 1st July that will consolidate the operations of the Builders Registration Board; Painters Registration Board; Plumbers Licensing Board; and the Building Industry Development directorate from the Department of Treasury and Finance. The Building Commission will provide a 'one-stop shop' for industry and consumers for registration and licensing, building and plumbing standards, industry development, technical information and disputes.

Consumers will benefit from a single, independent and knowledgeable source of information, rather than dealing with four separate entities. The Building Commission will also manage streamlining of the building approvals process under a new Building Act currently being drafted.

The new legislation will group registration of builders, painters, building surveyors and specialist certifiers to enable them to be transferred to the proposed national licensing system. The Plumbers Licensing Board will continue to operate through the Building Commission until plumber licensing also moves to the national licensing system. (SOURCE: *SCC e-news 10 July 2009*)

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Unions to push for 15pc super contribution

THE Rudd government has left open the idea of lifting the compulsory superannuation contribution above its current 9 per cent rate as unions prepare to push for their long-held goal of 15per cent contributions by 2015 at this month's ALP national conference.

Superannuation Minister Chris Bowen said yesterday that raising the compulsory superannuation contribution above 9per cent was being examined as part of the Henry tax review and the Harmer retirement review. "Obviously higher post-retirement incomes are better than lower post-retirement incomes but there's a trade-off with pre-retirement incomes and we need to strike that balance," Mr Bowen told the Ten Network's Meet the Press program.

His comments came as ACTU secretary Jeff Lawrence told The Australian that unions would push their long-held goal of lifting compulsory contributions to 15per cent by 2015 at the ALP national conference in Sydney later this month. Unions would also be arguing for reforms to superannuation tax and the treatment of casuals in relation to superannuation.

The government has faced pressure to review retirement contributions from the funds management industry and from former prime minister Paul Keating, who has long been an advocate of pushing the compulsory contribution towards 15 per cent. Superannuation has been championed as one of the solutions to funding the retirement of Australia's ageing workforce. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 13.7.09)

Business lending up 4% in May

Lending to businesses increased in May after a sharp decline the previous month but the value of all personal loans fell further, latest figures show. Total commercial lending, which includes loans for investment properties, rose 4.0 per cent in May after falling 12.1 per cent the previous month, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data showed.

Citi economists Paul Brennan and Josh Williamson said the "underlying trend" in business lending appeared to be stabilising after sharp falls at the end of 2008 and early 2009. "This is positive for future business credit growth, although we do not expect the current weakness in business credit to improve quickly," the Citi economists said in a research note. "Business surveys suggest that access to lending has improved somewhat recently, but overall demand will remain subdued given expected large falls in business spending." (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 13.7.09)

Business conditions jump to 9-month high

A more positive outlook by firms about the state of the domestic economy has translated into a sharp improvement in business conditions to the strongest level in nine months, a survey shows. The National Australia Bank (NAB) monthly business survey's measure of business conditions rose 12 index points to minus-2 points in June.

It is the highest reading since September 2008, before the collapse of global US investment bank Lehman Brothers. All components of the business conditions index, including trading conditions, profitability, employment, forward orders, improved in June. The survey's measure of business confidence rose six index points to four points, returning to positive territory for the first time in 18 months.

A reading below zero indicates pessimists outnumber optimists. The business confidence index reached minus-30 points in early 2009, but has been on a quick upward path since as global share markets rallied and commodities prices increased. The business conditions had not improved at the same pace, until this month. NAB chief economist Alan Oster said the strength in business conditions was welcome, albeit it surprising, news. "That's really good. Very few places in the rest of the world have got that," Mr Oster said. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 14.7.09)

Unionist threatened contractor

A BUILDING union organiser threatened a non-union subcontractor with bankruptcy, telling him he would "screw you and make your life a misery" if he continued to work on a NSW shopping centre project without joining the union.

Federal magistrate Matthew Smith found that Sammy Manna, an official with the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union, threatened the contractor, John Holm, and told him he would have him "audited". Mr Manna faces penalties of up to \$6600 and the CFMEU and its NSW branch face penalties of up to \$33,000.

The legal proceedings were brought by the Australian Building and Construction Commission, which alleged Mr Manna threatened Mr Holm with bankruptcy if his company, Anything Concrete, continued to work at the Portico Plaza project in the western suburb of Toongabbie in 2006.

Mr Manna denied he had made any threat, claiming Mr Holm had been keen to enrol his workers in the union. The magistrate found Mr Manna's evidence "entirely unreliable" and his version of his conversation with Mr Holm "unbelievable". "I am very comfortably satisfied that he received threats of adverse union action which he perceived to be sufficiently strong to cause him to accept advice that he should abandon a highly important contract," the magistrate found. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 15.7.09)

Stop scaring us silly

Environmental activists sabotage climate change solutions

NO one can fault economist Clive Hamilton for frankness in the way he gave the green game away on ABC TV's Lateline on Monday night. He dismissed the Rudd government's interest in developing clean coal as a way to reduce global warming as a "delusion", adding that "the only way to get people to take the necessary actions is to scare the pants off them". It says a lot about the ABC that an activist with no scientific credentials is allowed to lay down the law when a real scientist, climate change sceptic Ian Plimer, was recently sharply challenged by compere Tony Jones on Lateline. And it says more about the the green extreme's fury that people wonder why we must take severe steps now, given the disasters they warn about are so far in the future. In the absence of present evidence, Professor Hamilton suggests scaring us all silly.

It will not work, which is why "third way" theorist Anthony Giddens, who also appeared on Monday's Lateline, wants activists out of the argument. Instead of scare tactics, Lord Giddens suggests encouraging government and industry to develop technology to create new industries -- to turn the problem into an economic opportunity. This means replacing warnings of catastrophe with investment and research. He is right. London's air pollution problem ended when people abandoned burning low-grade coal in the 1950s. Smog was reduced by better engineered vehicles. And new technologies will reduce greenhouse emissions. The debate needs more engineers interested in clean coal and fewer eco-catastrophists. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 15.7.09)

WA job applications up 6% in June

Western Australians have bombarded job hunting website Seek in June with applications up 6 per cent as job advertisements fall nearly 5 per cent, a survey shows. The Seek employment index, which measures the ratio of new jobs to job applications on the Seek website, fell by a seasonally adjusted 4.7 per cent in June.

The index declined for the second consecutive month after dropping by 8.1 per cent in May and was 59.4 per cent lower from June 2008. But the June month result was the second best in 10 months after April's rise of 0.2 per cent. It was also better than the average monthly decline of 6.1 per cent seen between September 2008 and May 2009.

SEEK Employment managing director Joe Powell said while the result was encouraging, the overall trend pointed to

the jobs market stabilising rather than improving. "Despite recent comments that suggest Australia may avoid a recession and growing consumer confidence, it is still a very competitive market for those seeking employment," Mr Powell said.

"The June results once again suggest that to remain competitive in today's job market, you really need to look at up-skilling. "Those jobseekers that have qualifications and the flexibility to move around, should look to those areas where their skills are in most demand." (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *WA Business News*, Daily Business Alert, 15.7.09)

Shoppers to power WA out of recession: CCI

WA will be one of the first economies in the world to emerge from the global recession, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry has declared, with a survey suggesting that the State's shoppers will underpin strong growth inside two years. The latest economic outlook from the chamber, to be released today, predicts the State economy will contract one per cent this financial year — much of that over the coming six months — before roaring back in 2010-11 to 4.5 per cent.

It believes unemployment, now about 5 per cent, will peak at 6 per cent some time this financial year before falling back to current levels. The chamber believes that, after having relied on the mining boom and the associated lift in business investment and construction, the State's consumer and Government spending will boost and sustain the economy. Public investment, which grew just 1.9 per cent in 2006-07, is now tipped to grow 18 per cent in 2009-10.

Household consumption will stay positive over the forecast period.

Chief economist John Nicolaou said the State's economy had weathered the past year well and though conditions would deteriorate in the near term, they would lift strongly once the global economy stabilised. "The West Australian economy enters the new financial year well placed to be one of the first to emerge from the current global recession, with hopes rising that the economy may soon turn the corner," he said. (SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The West Australian*, 16.7.09)

Unions must change with times or they face extinction

ORGANISED labour can prosper in the 21st-century economy, but only if it offers services that workers need.

QUIETLY, inexorably, the way Australians engage in paid work has been transformed during the past quarter century. The dynamics in train are relentless. Workplaces will continue to evolve during the next 25 years, as more e-commuting small-business owners, contractors and employees set up shop in their own homes and local communities to avoid traffic snarls and be closer to their children. Public policy needs to keep up with changing community attitudes to different forms of work. Government policy should help, not hinder, socially desirable change.

A further aspect of the quiet workplace revolution is the preference being shown by working-age Australians to start their own businesses. Small-business operators comprise almost one in five members of the Australian workforce. The employees of yesterday are becoming the self-employed bosses of tomorrow.

Australia's army of nearly one million independent contractors constitutes a large and growing component of the workforce. Genuine independent contractors are connected to the world of work on commercial terms, not as employees, while sham contracting is nothing more than a convenient device for employers to avoid their obligations to make superannuation guarantee payments and workers compensation premiums.

Smart union leaders know that driving employers to the wall through wildcat strikes and work bans in pursuit of pay increases outside of prescribed bargaining periods doesn't help their members now or in their future job security. Today's industrial relations laws prohibit most militant activity outside prescribed bargaining periods and competition policy has outlawed secondary boycotts, where members of one union take industrial action in sympathy with causes being pursued by other unionists.

Modern union leaders negotiate hard during authorised bargaining periods but tend to stick to enterprise agreements once they are struck because of the penalties for breaching workplace laws or because they are willing in good faith to accept the terms of the agreements reached.

Progressive unions may consider enhancing their offer of a bundle of services to existing and prospective members based on the needs and desires of working people in a modern, ever-evolving economy. Representation in workplace bargaining and support for lifelong learning would remain core union business. But they could be augmented by services such as legal and tax advice, assistance with private health insurance and advice on home and contents, car and life insurance. Why not also include help in arranging child care and even personal counselling?

Freedom of association is a fundamental right in any democracy. Those who choose not to be union members are free to do so. But unions, now that Work Choices is dead, have the democratic right to approach working people with an offer of service if they choose union membership.

Indeed, union membership need not be limited to employees; independent contractors could be formal union members, as they are in the Transport Workers Union, the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union and some other unions. Or contractors could be non-members subscribing to services they especially value through the payment of a one-off fee or annual service fee. Unions offering such services to independent contractors would be doing so under commercial law, in competition with employer organisations, law firms and anyone else who wants to compete in an open market.

Some unions that traditionally have been regarded as militant are quietly developing bundles of these sorts of services for employees and independent contractors.

Trade unionism has played a wonderful role in the development of the modern Australian economy and in the pursuit of a just society. With 1.8 million members, the trade union movement remains one of the largest community-based organisations in Australia. Through its support for the weak and the vulnerable the union movement continues to be a force for fairness in an open economy.

Craig Emerson is the federal Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy.
(SOURCE/EXTRACT: *The Australian*, 16.7.09)

TAFE Response Unit TAFA WA

...tafe professionals supporting industry and workers affected by workplace redundancies...

Industry Helpline 1800 303 319

What is the TAFE Response Unit?

The TAFE Response Unit has been established to provide immediate and direct support to West Australian industries affected by the global economic downturn. It is a central point of contact where employers and employees involved in workplace redundancies can get assistance with further training options and recognition of existing skills.

How does it work?

Employers who are planning redundancies and employees experiencing retrenchment can phone the TAFE Response Unit's free helpline. TAFEWA professionals will provide immediate information and referral on career development, training options at TAFEWA colleges and Recognition of Prior Learning.

How can it help me?

If you are an employer, the TAFE Response Unit can support you to support your workers through a very difficult time.

If you are an employee, contact with the TAFE Response Unit can help increase your prospects of finding a new job by offering you a range of training pathways.

I need the support of the TAFE Response Unit!

Call the free helpline on 1800 303 319 during business hours or visit the TAFE Response Unit website at www.tafe.wa.edu.au/taferesponseunit

Central TAFE // Central West TAFE // Challenger TAFE // Swan TAFE // West Coast TAFE // CY O'Connor TAFE // Great Southern TAFE // Kimberley TAFE // Pilbara TAFE // South West Regional College



ATO Activity Statements - FREE
Systems Mastery
Financial Dynamics

Social Media / Viral Marketing

Facebook is for teenagers! It's a waste of time!

Who wants to listen to my silly Tweets anyway?

I haven't got time to Blog!

They're the exact responses business owners give us everyday until they start seeing how Social Media is working for other businesses. A typical follow up response is "why didn't I do this two years ago?!"

Big business has already learnt how to use Social Media to promote their products but the same can't be said for smaller businesses. Social Media is not just for teenagers anymore – it's a serious business tool for some. Over 500,000 people in Perth are on Facebook, and more people over aged 40 are on it than under aged 18!

No question – your business needs to be there, but how? It's not too late to learn, but learn before your competitors do.

This half day seminar will give you the opportunity to see what all the fuss is about and decide *whether Social Media is for you*.

Can you afford to miss this?

Introduction to Social Media – the opportunities for business.
The platform, tools and gadgets you need to succeed.
Why a blog is so important for Social Media marketing success.
Blogging, Facebooking and Twittering basics.
How to use Social Media to promote your business.
How to use Social Media for market research and testing new products & services.
Best practice steps to implement Social Media in your business.

Charlie Gunningham is the CoFounder & Managing Director of aussiehome.com. He holds a MBA from the University of Western Australia. He has 23 years experience as an educator and is currently lecturing eCommerce at UWA. He has 10+ years experience in online marketing.

This program is partially funded by the Australian Government.

Dates: Monday 20th July, 2009
Venue: Small Business Centre - Stirling, 45 Delawney St, BALCATTWA 6021
Time: Morning - 8.30am – 12noon - [Register here](#)
Afternoon - 1.00pm – 4.30pm - [Register here](#)
Cost: \$99.00 per person inc GST, this includes light refreshments.

Your business may be eligible for a FREE training voucher to go towards the cost of this excellent workshop.

Don't miss out!! [Register Now](#). Please direct any queries to [Maxine Scott](#) on 9240 6337. Small Business Centre - Stirling (SBCS), 45 Delawney St, Balcatta WA 6021



SCC e-news 10 July 2009

Hanson Swan Business Awards 15th August 2009

This year the Hanson Swan Business Awards will be held at the Novotel Vines Resort on Saturday the 15th of August with pre-dinner drinks commencing at 6.30pm. Come along join in the fun and celebrate with local business entrants. The event features Aussie Larrikins and live band Face to Face. Tickets are \$120 per person and are available from the Chamber Office. **So book your tickets now!!!!**

NB: Accommodation is available at discounted rates contact the Chamber office on 9374 5000 for a booking form or click the following link...

[Accommodation Booking Form](#)

'One-stop shop' building regulator

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Pearce Women Speak

Afternoon Tea with Senator Helen Coonan. [For more details](#)

Coming Events

The Echo Newspaper is now printing the Swan Chamber of Commerce "Calendar of Events" every week.

Members News

Cape Lavender now open in the Swan Valley

For more info click the following link... [Cape Lavender info](#)

Ace Cinemas Up Coming Releases

For more info click the following link... [Ace Cinemas](#)

FIA Westpac WA Food & Beverage AWARDS

Nominate your business achievement today by submitting your nomination details on the attached form and forward to the FIA office. Applications close July 30 2009. For info [Awards Entry Form](#) or [Claim form](#)

Midland Gate Shuttle Service

Shuttle Service to start on the 6th July for more info click the following link....[Midland Shuttle Bus or Info](#)

Jimmy Deans Diner

Jimmy Deans Holiday Specials more info click the following link....[Jimmy Deans Holiday Specials](#)

Small Business Centre East Metro Information Sessions

Tuesday 14th July presenter Martin Kerrigan is talking on the topic of Importing & Exporting for Small Businesses. More info click the following link....[SBCEM Information Session](#)

Thursday 23rd July presenter Martin Kerrigan is talking on the topic of Advertising for Small Businesses. More more info click the following link....[Advertising for Small Businesses](#)

Membership Drive

Any member who introduces or recruits more than 3 new members to the Swan Chamber of Commerce will **receive 1 years free Chamber membership** for the following financial year. Remember to put your name next to 'Recruited By' on the application form.

Download the Membership Application Form now....[Membership Application Form 08/09](#)

Small Business Smart Business Training Vouchers

The West Australian Department of Education and Training, offers your business up to a \$200 Small Business Smart Business Training Voucher, to assist you with the cost of training to improve your business management skills. Download the SBSB Application Form..[SBSB Application Form 2008](#)

Swan Chamber of Commerce PO BOX 166 MIDLAND 6936 Ph: 93745000 Fax: 92743369



THE SMALL BUSINESS PARTNERS



Combined Small Business Alliance
of Western Australia Inc. (CoSBA)
www.cosba.com.au



<http://www.sbdc.com.au>

West Coast Small Business Training Institute

<http://smallbusinesssolutions.wa.gov.au>

A Government sponsored Program you can't afford to miss

- Improve cash flow
- Grow your Business
- Make more money
- Be better prepared
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- Independent Business advisors
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- Business advice from real Business leaders who have run successful businesses
- Recognition of your skills leading towards a business qualification.

These are some of the areas where this new heavily subsidised program can help your small business.

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