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Simon O'Brien
Minister for Finance; Commerce; Small Business

Wed 16 March, 2011

Legislation introduced to create WA's first Small Business Commissioner

Portfolio: Small Business

Small Business Minister Simon O'Brien today announced the introduction of legislation to establish a Small Business Commissioner in Western Australia.

The Small Business and Retail Shop Legislation Amendment Bill 2011 was introduced into State Parliament today by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Small Business, Liza Harvey.

Mr O'Brien says he is confident the appointment of a Small Business Commissioner will enhance a competitive and fair operating environment in WA and provide an effective means of resolving business-to-business disputes through alternative dispute resolution.

"The commissioner will provide a low-cost, non-litigious way of resolving business disputes," he said.

"While modelled on the successful Victorian commissioner, the expanded capabilities of our commissioner represent a significant improvement.

"The Small Business Commissioner will be established within the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) and replace the position of the SBDC Managing Director.

"Overall, the new commissioner will enhance the powers and functions of the SBDC and increase the range of services available for WA's small business owners and operators.

"The drafting of the Bill has been meticulous, involving extensive consultation, and as extended trading hours have already commenced, it is hoped the Bill will be passed without delay."

It is envisaged that the model for the Western Australian Small Business Commissioner will include educative, advisory, investigative and mediation services, together with the existing advocacy and policy functions of the SBDC.

The Government is calling on the Opposition to support the Bill, to ensure its passage is not delayed.

Minister's office - 9213 6400

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