



27 October 2021

Ms Kim Richards MP
Chair
Education, Employment and Training Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Via email: EETC@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Richards,

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER BILL 2021

I write to you regarding the inquiry into the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021 which seeks to permanently establish a Queensland Businesses Commissioner and a supporting office. R&CA is broadly supportive of the creation of such a position to provide support, awareness, and advice to small business across Queensland.

This is especially important given that many small businesses are recovering in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is important to keep in mind when, according to IBISWorld, restaurants, cafes and caterers have lost \$10 billion in bookings and events since the start of COVID-19.

R&CA is the national industry association representing the interests of more than 47,000 restaurants, cafés and catering businesses across Australia. The café, restaurant and catering sector is vitally important to the national economy, generating over \$37 billion in retail turnover each year as well as employing 450,000 people.

Over 92 per cent of businesses in the café, restaurant and catering sector are small businesses, employing 19 people or less. In QLD, the sector represents 8,354 businesses employing 112,000 people each year.

R&CA delivers tangible outcomes to small businesses within the hospitality industry by influencing the policy decisions and regulations that impact the sector's operating environment. R&CA is committed to ensuring the industry is recognised as one of excellence, professionalism, profitability and sustainability. This includes advocating the broader social and economic contribution of the sector to industry and government stakeholders, as well as highlighting the value of the restaurant experience to the public.

R&CA is supportive of the establishment of a permanent commissioner that will:

- 1) Reduce red tape for small business.
- 2) Make it easier for small business to do business with the Queensland Government.
- 3) Provide fair, independent and balanced dispute resolution.
- 4) Liaise regularly and effectively with small businesses stakeholders, including R&CA, regarding upcoming initiatives by the Queensland Government in the hospitality space.
- 5) Receive and respond to queries, submissions and concerns raised by small business and the R&CA on the delivery of government policy and services.
- 6) Connect small business with expert advice.
- 7) Communicate with the public and raise awareness of the benefits and opportunities of small business as well as with Queensland Government Departments.

If you wish to discuss R&CA's views further, do not hesitate to contact Hugo Robinson (Manger – Policy & Government) by email at [REDACTED].

We thank you again for the opportunity to make this submission.

Regards,



Wes Lambert CPA FGIA MAICD
Chief Executive Officer
Restaurant and Catering Australia