

Question on Notice
No. 262
Asked on 2 April 2014

MR LATTER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM, MAJOR EVENTS, SMALL BUSINESS AND THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES (MRS STUCKEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline key initiatives to alleviate the burden for small business in Waterford?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to building the right business environment for Queensland small businesses including small business owners and operators in Waterford. A key part of having the right business environment for small business to grow and prosper is to alleviate the burden for small business.

Almost 96 percent of businesses in Queensland are small businesses. The Queensland Government has been working hard on setting the right environment for small business to succeed and introduced the Queensland Small Business Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy and Action Plan provides a planned and coordinated approach to set the economic conditions for business success and is aimed at improving business opportunities and alleviating burdens to business.

A number of initiatives from the Strategy and Action Plan are already up and running. The government has expanded the payroll tax exemption so 90% of Queensland's employing businesses do not pay payroll tax. The Queensland Government late payment policy has also been implemented to ensure all bills from small business suppliers to government involving contracts of up to \$1million are paid within 30 days.

The Queensland Government established the Office of Best Practice Regulation in order to achieve a red tape reduction target of 20 per cent by 2018. To date over 9,400 regulatory requirements have been removed - nearly 10,000 less regulatory burdens for the Queensland economy and businesses. In addition, 429 pages of legislation have been abolished, providing significant cost savings to the business community.

Another key initiative is the Queensland Small Business Week which celebrates the outstanding contribution small businesses make to the Queensland economy. This year the Week will take place from 1-6 September and gives small business owners and operators the opportunity to hear new ideas, access information and connect with other businesses to help them grow and prosper. I encourage all businesses in Waterford to get involved in 2014 Queensland Small Business Week. Further information on this year's Week is available by visiting www.business.qld.gov.au/smallbusinessweek.

To support local small businesses, the Queensland Government introduced the “Think Queensland, buy locally” campaign encouraging everyone in the community to buy goods and services in their local area. As an extension to the buy locally campaign, “Buy locally Saturday” will be held as part of 2014 Queensland Small Business Week on Saturday 6 September.

In a big win for small business, the Queensland Government has introduced online tendering resources which will allow small businesses to operate on a level playing field with larger enterprises for the first time. Over the years small business has struggled with the government’s tendering system and the new online tendering resources make it easy for small business to develop competitive tenders, maximising their chances of winning Queensland Government contracts. The online resources consist of three parts: a series of guides that steps businesses through the process; a fit to supply diagnostic tool; and, a specialised search function that enables businesses to query the QTenders database.

The Queensland Government has substantially expanded the Business and Industry Portal (www.business.qld.gov.au) which is a one-stop-shop for business access to government services. Providing small businesses with a wide range of support the Portal offers services including information, resources and tools, for example, advice on developing a marketing plan or preparing a credible business plan. Since July 2012 the portal has serviced over 2.5 million customers and reduced burdens by saving Queensland businesses \$116 million in time and money in 2012-13.

All of these actions are directed at alleviating the burdens faced by small business and supporting a climate in which Queensland small businesses can operate and grow, including small businesses in Waterford.