



MEDIA RELEASE

DR CRAIG EMERSON

Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy
Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs
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NEW MILESTONE REACHED FOR SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT LINE WITH 15,000 CALLS RECEIVED

More than 15,000 calls have been received by the Government's Small Business Support Line to date, with a resolution rate of 89 per cent, Small Business Minister Craig Emerson announced today.

Dr Emerson said the Support Line, a Labor Government initiative launched in September last year, had exceeded all expectations in terms of the support it offered small business, and its popularity with business owners.

"It's fantastic that business owners are utilising this service in such large numbers and getting the answers they need," he said.

"It's an initiative we put in place anticipating it would be popular – but the fact that we now have more than 400 calls a week shows just how great the demand is for such a service."

Eighty-nine per cent of queries were resolved by the Support Line staff, with the remaining 11 per cent being referred to third parties, such as the Australian Taxation Office.

Dr Emerson said almost 60 per cent of the callers were starting a new business.

"Starting a business can be a daunting experience, and the Gillard Government is pleased to be able to give this vital assistance and support," Dr Emerson said.

"The fact that so many people are having a go at starting a business is encouraging in the aftermath of the global recession.

"But the Gillard Government recognises that many small businesses are still struggling, with low margins on their sales, and we will continue to support them into economic recovery through small business tax breaks funded by the Minerals Resource Rent Tax.

"Through the links the Support Line has with Government agencies, both State and Federal, small business owners now have a simple way to get the information they need."

The Small Business Support Line can be contacted on **1800 777 275**. It is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm AEST.

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