

Media Release
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Newsagents call for Pollies Helping Hand to go a Step Further

Australia's peak newsagency body has welcomed an initiative by the NSW Business Chamber to have politicians work in small businesses to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing the sector, but wants the campaign to have tangible outcomes.

More than 80 State and Federal Politicians will be 'rostered on' at small business throughout the State for the annual week long NSW Business Chamber 'Pollies for Small Business' program.

The Australian Newsagents' Federation (ANF) believes the initiative is a positive one and is calling for the information gathered by the participating politicians to be properly documented at the end of the week.

ANF CEO Anthony Matis said with meaningful outcomes the initiative has the potential to be more than just an awareness campaign for small business.

"MPs will see first-hand how the laws and regulations they create impact on the state's 500,000 small businesses. We're calling for each politician to report back on what they learn and then offer a solution to any particular challenge facing the business owner," Mr Matis said.

"ANF has been working for its members in very tangible ways to improve life for newsagents. We have a valuable working relationship with Small Business Minister Dr Craig Emerson and we have made very meaningful contributions to the Minister's efforts to help newsagents in recent months.

"If 80 politicians are about to descend on a small businesses across the state to spend an hour or two helping out, I urge them to make the most of the experience and obtain a clear understanding of the challenges facing the owner of the business.

"This is a perfect opportunity for politicians from all parties to demonstrate transparency in their genuine desire to help small business."

The past year has been tough for newsagents. Not only have they faced the credit issues brought on by the Global Financial Crisis, and the proposed changes to awards as experienced by other small businesses, they have also had to deal with supplier and publisher issues unique to the newsagency channel.

There are nearly 5000 individually owned newsagencies in Australia turning over \$6.5 BILLION a year and employing 20,000 people.

The Australian newsagency system has served publishers and consumers extremely well and played a major role in making magazine sales in Australia the highest per capita in the world.

Collectively Australian newsagencies home-deliver 3 million newspapers, distribute newspapers and magazines to 25,000 retail subagents and serve 2.5 million customers face to face each day. Newsagencies attract 83% of Australians every week!

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