

# AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ANNUAL REPORT AND BUSINESS REVIEW 2015



Australian  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry

# AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN THE MEDIA

## Two-tier business tax concerns ACCI

Joanna Mather

Treasurer Joe Hockey has hinted at a two-tiered business tax system in which all companies, regardless of size, would pay a lower rate on their first portion of profit and then move into a higher bracket.

This option is similar to how income

likes the second option.

"If they charge 28.5 per cent on the first \$5 million and then go up to 30 per cent after that for everybody, then it's probably doable without too much red tape," she said.

"If what they do is have a cut-off, and say everybody who has a profit lower

small business package to help create jobs.

The 1.5 per cent tax cut is the centrepiece of the package but the government is still mulling how to extend relief to the two-thirds of small business operators who would not benefit because they sit outside the cor-

## Business and unions fume at wage ris

Ewin Hannan

Workplace editor

Businesses have warned they could be forced to cut staff or reduce employee hours despite the Fair Work Commission rejecting the union movement's minimum wage claim and awarding a "modest" \$16 a week increase to the nation's low-paid workers from July 1.

In a double blow to the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the commission awarded a lower minimum wage increase than last year, refusing the ACTU's \$27 a week claim and rejecting the peak union body's push to have

which had risen by 2.8 per cent.

"We are extremely concerned that every year that gap is getting wider and wider, and we are heading down the path of the US, where we could have an entrenched class of working poor in this nation," he said.

The small rise would not address the household stress endured by low-income earners facing rising health, education and childcare costs, he said.

Mr Oliver said unions had been told previously to exercise wage restraint when inflation was rising but were being told now to show restraint when inflation was down. "We just can't

he said.

The \$16 a week increase is expected to apply to about 800,000 workers, while a further 1.06 million employees who rely on awards and are paid at the C10 tradesperson's rate or above will receive pay rises ranging from \$18.70 to \$31 a week. Retailers said the wage

increase would slow job creation.

Graham Greenaway, who operates the historic Freemasons Hotel in the West Australian town of Geraldton, said the \$16 a week increase would force him to drop plans to increase the pub's operating hours. He said he would have preferred a \$6 a week

## Business into bat for trade deal

Business leaders have warned the union-led attack on a free-trade deal with China could undermine crucial export opportunities.

Senior Labor figures are bracing for the issue of the China-Australia free-trade agreement to explode on the floor at Labor's national conference. Bill Shorten has backed the assault against the trade pact.

Former Australian trade ambassador Alan Oxley, writing in *The Australian* today, has criticised the Labor leader for being in the position "where important positions on national policies which have an important

will be denied new opportunities in China".

But Australian Council of Trade Unions president Ged Kearney drew a line in the sand, saying she believed the entire deal should be torpedoed if it could not be amended.

Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Michaelia Cash and Trade Minister Andrew Robb's parliamentary secretary Steven Ciobo said Mr Shorten's decision to back a "xenophobic scare campaign" against the deal showed he was beholden to the "most militant elements of the

## Make IR an election issue, business tells PM

JOE KELLY

Business and industry say a Productivity Commission draft report on the workplace relations system should lay the groundwork for Tony Abbott to take a meaningful reform package to the next election.

The findings will be released to a series of five "issues

"We've seen the government accept and embrace the fact that small business is the engine room of the economy. One of the most important things they can do is make it easier for small businesses to employ people, easier for small businesses to grow and easier from them to open longer hours."

Australian Industry Group chief executive Innes Willox hoped the draft report would "lay the groundwork for a discussion

## WANT REFORM? SHARPEN TAX AXE

A LEADING business lobby group has called on the Federal Government to introduce a corporate tax rate of 25 per cent and abolish the top income tax rate to kickstart growth.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry said it was also seeking to have payroll tax and stamp duties eliminated.

In its response to the Government's taxation discussion paper, the group said Australia needed tax reform that would result in

TAX

jobs and growth.

"Tax reform means growing the economic pie and not simply squabbling about how to carve it up. Australia's focus must be on

lowering tax rates, broadening the economic base and strengthening incentives to work, save and invest,"

ACCI chief Kate Carnell, pictured, said.



The group's director of economics and industry policy, John Osborn, said the 37 per cent personal tax rate ought to be scrapped, with tax brackets instead linked to inflation to stop hurting low and middle-income earners through bracket creep.

To offset the revenue losses, the group recommended a higher and broader GST and a broadbased land tax.

Mr Osborn welcomed the Government's targeting of companies attempting to shift profits offshore.

## Business demands economic stability

PAUL GILDER

BUSINESS leaders have urged Canberra to rediscover some long-lost stability as Australia faces the challenges of refining a stuttering economy and bedding down a major opportunity to boost trade with China.

And they have urged their counterparts to share the responsibility to pursue growth-generating avenues, as a lower low interest rates open the door for a lift in business spending.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief

anybody," she said.

"What business wants is confidence; that requires a government with solid direction, the capacity to sell the message and an appetite for taking on real reform."

Chief among those is tax reform, which was highlighted as a key plank at last month's National Reform Summit, Ms Carnell said.

Australia's 30 per cent corporate tax rate is about 5 per cent higher than the average across OECD economies, while its 10 per cent GST undercuts its counterparts, Ms Carnell said business

Brisbane developer David Devine (pictured) said Australia was suffering from a lack of confidence. "Australia is being left behind and a lot of it has to do with leadership and confidence. We need some stability and direction in Canberra and some decision making that will take the country in the right direction," he said.

Scott Hutchinson, head of construction heavyweight Hutchinson Builders, is opposed to a change. "I don't think they should change. It scares people when you chop term," he said.

## Business pushes Turnbull for tangible reform now

Mark Kenny, Lisa Cox

Business, welfare, and union leaders plan to press new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Treasurer Scott Morrison to commit to real tangible reform in the near term to unshackle a sluggish economy and reposition Australia

form, however, remain the subject of disagreement.

While the Abbott government ruled out any negative changes to superannuation indefinitely, the reform proponents say tax concessions designed to encourage saving for retirement are

## Industry hails 'innovative' new team

RICHARD GUYAN  
ANDREW MAIN  
GOVERNMENT

Business leaders have welcomed the composition of Malcolm Turnbull's new cabinet, which dumps several experienced ministers and creates new portfolios, including resources and innovation.

Treasurer Joe Hockey, industry minister Ian Macfarlane and small business minister Bruce

the key challenge is the need to sell a vision to the Australian people, and to communicate the kind of changes that we need to prosper," Ms Carnell said. (Former PM) Tony Abbott did a number of good things, but the government had trouble communicating why they were doing it.

The ACCI boss also welcomed

the economic appointments.

While Mr Morrison did not have a background in economics, "neither did Paul Keating or Peter Costello". "He needs to listen to

Continued on Page 20

## Small business drives the big issues

The ACCI chief opens up on life, work and investing

KIRSTY SIMPSON  
MONEY TALKS



Pharmacist, politician and advocate for industry, Kate Carnell has had a rich and varied career. Now chief executive of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ms Carnell has also headed beyond blue and the Australian Food and Grocery Council, after serving as chief minister of the ACT from 1995-2000.

Q: Your parents were accountants and then ran a family building

\$30,000. Eventually Westpac came to the party, so I still bank with them today. I worked seven days a week for years.

Q: What was your first investment? How did it go?

It was probably some shares, when I was about 16-17 and working in a restaurant. Dad gave me some advice on places to invest, and it was Evans Deakin, and another one was Humes. Some did really well and some didn't. And I learned that there were good ones and bad ones. Then my first major investment was when my husband and I came to Canberra and we bought a house and then a business.

Q: What is your approach to savings and investing today?

I don't do aggressive investing, and I am not a big risk taker, probably due to my small business background. I am happy to take a measured risk.

that changed the way you approach budgets since? What did you learn?

To put it in context, when I became chief minister, we had a substantial deficit, but by the time I left, we'd turned it around.

But I suppose what I learned is that you should never take your eyes off the detail. There is no doubt that it is a great stadium. It was the financing of the deal that was the problem.

You learn heaps more from the things that went wrong and I certainly did then.

Q: What do you think of the state of political superannuation? It's significantly better than it was. I never got a lifetime pension — ACT has never had a generous scheme — we got the same as public servants.

Quite seriously, politicians should be paid superannuation in the same way as public servants, but we should pay politicians

## 'Seismic shift' could knock firms off their feet

EXCLUSIVE

SHANE RODGERS  
QUEENSLAND EDITOR

Businesses have been warned to expect a seismic shift in the way the economy operates as more "collaborative" start-ups that bypass traditional commerce patterns are launched.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Kate Carnell said these new businesses, such as ride-share service provider Uber and private accommodation site Airbnb, are the beginning of a "funda-

pete with existing businesses.

Ms Carnell said most businesses accepted that the competition was inevitable. However, she said there was also an expectation that the same laws needed to apply to everyone and governments needed to ensure new players were not given a legislative advantage.

"I think it (the collaborative economy) is a massive disrupter," she said. "I don't think it's a marginal play. What we're seeing is the beginning of a fundamental change in the way we work, the way we do business, the way we deal with people. It is not all about traditional business

exist," she said. "They are moving from being incredibly asset-heavy businesses to asset-light models where the network is connecting assets in really interesting ways."

Melina Graham and Chantalle Trainor from Brisbane have left their professional jobs and grown a successful cleaning business using Airtasker, a platform that allows consumers to track down

others who can help with a variety of everyday tasks. Ms Graham said Airtasker allowed people to find them easily and as reviews of their work were posted, business took off. They quickly grew from two to 10 staff and are in the process of employing a further seven. "I think Airtasker is successful



Australian  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry

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Chamber Annual Report and  
Business Review 2015

Published by the Australian  
Chamber of Commerce and  
Industry  
24 Brisbane Avenue  
BARTON ACT 2600

ISBN 9780646534091

EDITOR  
Sarah McGregor  
Senior Manager Marketing and  
Communications  
P: 02 6270 8000  
E: sarah.mcgregor@acci.asn.au  
www.acci.asn.au

DESIGN  
3 Degrees Marketing  
3dm.com.au

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**AS WE LOOK BACK ON 2015 WE CAN DO SO WITH A SENSE OF PRIDE IN OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AS AN ORGANISATION AND BE CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE WELL-POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE.**

Under the leadership of CEO Kate Carnell, the organisation has undertaken an exciting period of investment and growth, launching new initiatives that will expand our influence and our financial sustainability.

In August we launched our new corporate identity, showcasing the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry as an organisation that is innovative and focused on the future, just like the hundreds of thousands of businesses we represent. Our new Federation Star logo, our distinctive upwards arrow, our new motto and our new communications materials were all part of the first refresh of the organisation's brand since we commenced in our current form in 1992.

We have also succeeded in bringing in more than twenty new industry associations as members following a targeted membership drive. These new organisations, coming from a diverse range of economic sectors, strengthen the Australian Chamber's position as the country's most representative business organisation. Our new members are already adding great value to the Australian Chamber through their participation in activities and input into submissions and policy.

Our new Business Leaders Council is providing a fantastic platform for senior business people to participate in the Australian Chamber. A busy calendar of events in major cities has provided an opportunity for the exchange of ideas among participants and has created invaluable networks among members and political leaders.

We look forward to these initiatives expanding in the years ahead.

On the policy front 2015 has been one of success and challenge as policy positions of the Australian Chamber are being reflected in government decision-making at the highest level.

“The Australian Chamber, along with our members, have done great work in compiling evidence based, influential submissions and will continue to advocate for the adoption of our recommendations.”

This year's Federal Budget was a watershed for small businesses, giving them the support they need to invest, expand and employ staff. Their centrality to the Budget, and the quick bipartisan support, follows the efforts of the Australian Chamber in recent years in promoting the concerns of small business. It was gratifying to see our election campaign efforts of 2013, *“Small Business. Too Big to Ignore”* achieve real traction and reach such a crescendo of success.

Free trade has also been high on the agenda. During the past year the Government has finalised free trade agreements with Japan, Korea and most recently, China. These three agreements cover over 60 per cent of Australia's trade and will hopefully come into force by the end of 2015. The finalisation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) also brings together a dozen countries, including Australia, that between them account for nearly 40 per cent of global GDP. Australia already has trade agreements with many of the countries included in the TPP and the deal opens up access for some products to new geographic markets and greatly benefits local consumers, while providing a standard set of trading rules across the member countries. As many Australian exporters can attest, the lack of standardisation of rules between agreements is a major issue which inhibits business use of Free Trade Agreements due to their complexity.

The Australian Chamber was vocal in advocating for the early adoption of the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. We joined with other business representatives from the resources and agricultural sectors to counteract a fear campaign led by the Union movement that threatened to derail this important agreement with our largest trading partner and potentially sour our

long term trading relationship. To advance the trade between our two countries the chamber movement, spearheaded by the NSW Business Chamber, is leading the Export Growth China initiative, which involves Australian and Chinese expertise on the ground in Shanghai. Aspiring Australian exporters can have their wares presented to potential buyers and make connections with local partners. Already export agreements are being reached and we look forward to those continuing.

On workplace relations, the Australian Chamber has significantly increased our activity and profile. The Fair Work Commission is undertaking the Four-yearly Review of Modern Awards, to which we have been a major contributor, and we look forward to seeing the fruits of these endeavours. Our advocacy on the Annual Wage Review was also well received and led to cautious restraint in the annual increase. We have committed significant resources to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Framework, and hope some of our recommendations materialise as government policy.

Our campaign for greater collaboration between the education and training sector and the employers who rely on the skills of graduates is resonating with the government and the community. Australian Chamber representatives have offered their expertise in forums that seek to bridge this divide and we have forcefully made our case in submissions to government processes. Despite a challenging environment we continue to argue the case for working visas to allow for Australian businesses to find the workers they need from different parts of the world as part of our global integration.

In the past year, the federal government has launched a large number of major reviews into taxation, federal state relations, competition policy, red tape and workplace relations to name a few. These processes are important to ensure that Australia has the right policy settings for the future. The Australian Chamber, along with our members, have done great work in compiling evidence based, influential submissions and will continue to advocate for the adoption of our recommendations.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the membership, board and staff of the Australian Chamber who have supported me during my tenure as president. I have enjoyed overseeing the transition to a new CEO, the adoption of a plan to address the long term financial stability of the Australian Chamber and the decision to make a significant investment in our workplace relations team amongst a range of other major changes to the organisation. It has been an honour to lead the organisation and I look forward to celebrating its future success.

Peter Hood  
Australian Chamber President



# CEO'S REPORT

**THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY HAS LONG BEEN THE LARGEST AND MOST REPRESENTATIVE VOICE OF BUSINESS IN AUSTRALIA, AND THE STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO OUR ORGANISATION INTRODUCED THIS YEAR ENSURE WE WILL MAINTAIN AND GROW THIS POSITION INTO THE FUTURE.**

During 2015 we have embarked on a membership drive aimed at broadening our national association base and introducing the Business Leaders Council, allowing business leaders to have direct involvement in Australian Chamber activities for the first time. We have also invested in increasing our capacity in workplace relations with the appointments of Richard Clancy as Director of Workplace Relations and Alana Matheson and Dick Grozier as Deputy Director and Senior Counsel respectively. Our profile and outcomes in workplace relations have already improved significantly.

Long-term government funding for the Australian Chamber's workplace health and safety activities finished in 2014 but after consultation with members the Board decided to continue funding this important function under the capable leadership of Carolyn Davis, Director of Workplace Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation. With these new investments and other government-funded projects finishing, the Australian Chamber embarked on a full review of the organisation's budget under the direction of our President, Peter Hood.

A three-year plan has been adopted by the Board to move the organisation back to a balanced budget. I am confident that the Australian Chamber is now well positioned for sustainable and robust future with an improved capacity to deliver on our members' needs.

Perhaps the most eye-catching change in 2015 was the launch of our new corporate identity, featuring a new logo, tag line and visual brand. This refreshed identity, developed in collaboration with Ken Cato, a leading Australian and global designer, reflects our position as an organisation that is forward thinking and focused on the future.

The new logo, featuring the Federation Star, and tag line "Working for Business. Working for Australia", has been designed to unite chambers of commerce across the country and strengthen the Australian Chamber's profile and influence on behalf of members. State, territory and local chambers are invited to embrace the identity, which gives a distinctive colour scheme to reflect a local identity while demonstrating membership of a broader family. Already the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry has adopted the new identity, and we look forward to others doing the same.

The adoption of our new brand meant refurbishing the Canberra office. I would like to thank my executive assistant, Sharryn Waite, who managed the office fit-out project while continuing to expertly manage me. Our Melbourne office has relocated to Collins Street, embedded in the new VECCI office. I would like to thank Steve Hatzis for his tremendous efforts in making this move happen while still maintaining a functioning reception for the Chamber.

Our new identity was launched in August at our inaugural Business Leaders Summit in Canberra. The Summit brought together dozens of leaders of the Australian business, politics and media to discuss topics including productivity, technology, workplace relations and communications. The event, which attracted senior ministers and shadow ministers, once again demonstrated the Australian Chamber's position as a leading forum for debate on public policy matters. I would like to thank our new media and communications team, Ari Sharp, Sarah McGregor and Celia Logue, for the wonderful job they did in organising this event and raising our media profile and managing our various publications throughout the year.

The industry association membership of the Australian Chamber has grown rapidly this year. We have welcomed 20 industry associations to our membership, bringing the total of industry association members to almost 50. This success is largely due to the amazing work of Paul Nicolaou and his very capable assistant Nerida Pearson. The expanded membership gives us access to the insights and expertise of a larger share of the business community and delivers us a more stable financial future.

Vital to our growth as an organisation has been the Business Leaders Council, a new forum that gives individual businesses a chance to participate directly in Australian Chamber activities. The Business Leaders Council, which attracted over 20 members in its inaugural year, offers events across the country at which participants can hear from guest speakers, join the public policy debate and network with other business leaders and CEOs from among our membership. We look forward to building on the successful start to the Business Leaders Council with an expanded calendar of activities in 2016.

This year we have intensified our activities in the tourism sector, working with the National Tourism Alliance to jointly form the Australian Chamber National Tourism Council. Our aim is to be the leading national forum for tourism, giving tourism a stronger and more influential voice in Canberra. The thousands of businesses involved in tourism employ nearly a million people and contribute \$90 billion to our country's gross domestic product, so it is important that their interests are well represented to government.

This year we also significantly upgraded the Australian Chamber website, modernising our online presence by incorporating new tools that allow the site to be a rich repository of information for members, prospective members and other stakeholders. The new website makes it even easier for users to engage with the Australian Chamber and get involved in activities. A new customer relationship management system allows for member-only content, streamlining communications, committee activities and event management. This provides us great opportunities to use our website to more effectively meet the needs of members into the future.

In 2015 we were honoured to host several government ministers for significant policy speeches. In the lead up to the Budget in May, the then Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, addressed an Australian Chamber lunch in Sydney, while in the week after the Budget the then Treasurer, Joe Hockey, spoke to a similar gathering. Other ministers speaking to Australian Chamber gatherings include Simon Birmingham, Josh Frydenberg, Kelly O'Dwyer, Richard Colbeck, Eric Abetz, Paul Fletcher and Christian Porter. It is gratifying that these ministers are using Australian Chamber events as forums to communicate directly with the business community.

In the latter part of the year the Australian Chamber developed a good relationship with the new Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, and his senior ministers. I represented members at a high-level meeting between senior members of the new government and the leaders of the National Reform Summit around the Cabinet table in Canberra. Members of our senior management team also met separately with senior ministers to ensure the needs of business are considered in implementing new policies.

Shadow ministers have also been very accessible and willing to engage on various policy matters. We welcomed Labor Leader Bill Shorten as a speaker at our Business Leaders Summit Cocktail reception, while we have also had good discussions with the Shadow Treasurer, Chris Bowen, and the Shadow Workplace Relations Minister, Brendan O'Connor. During the year the Australian Chamber also worked with crossbenchers in the Senate to build understanding of issues of concern to the business community.

Looking ahead to 2016 we plan to play an active role in shaping the federal election agenda. All major parties recognise the importance of policies that allow businesses to innovate, invest and grow. The election campaign provides us with an important opportunity to ensure those supportive words are transformed into implementable policies. In partnership with our members, we plan to undertake a campaign that will put Australia's economic future high on the national agenda.

The achievements of this year would not have been possible without the commitment and hard work of my staff. I would like to make special mention of John Osborn, Director of Economics and Industry Policy, Jenny Lambert, Director of Employment, Education and Training, Bryan Clark, Director of Trade and International Affairs, and Rozanne Crawford, Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary, and their staff, for their hard work and huge contribution to the Australian Chamber over the past 12 months.

I also acknowledge the guidance and dedication of the Australian Chamber Board, led by Peter Hood. I would like to personally thank Peter for the wonderful job he has done during his time as President.

Kate Carnell AO  
Australian Chamber CEO

# ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER

## Working for business. Working for Australia

### **THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY STRIVES TO MAKE AUSTRALIA A GREAT PLACE TO DO BUSINESS.**

*The Australian Chamber promotes a world-class environment for growing business in Australia that encourages investment and entrepreneurship in order to lift wealth, employment and living standards. The Australian Chamber fosters a dynamic private sector driven by the ambition and innovation of businesspeople, employees and independent contractors.*

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the leading voice of Australian business at home and abroad. It brings together eight state and territory chambers of commerce with almost 50 national industry associations. Its members account for 300,000 businesses of all sizes across all industries and all parts of the country. Together the Australian Chamber's members employ more than 4 million people. The Australian Chamber seeks to make our nation more prosperous by making it a great place to do business by advocating on behalf of the business community on issues including economics, tax, trade, workplace relations, education and work health and safety.

The Australian Chamber represents Australian business in international forums, including the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Organisation of Employers and the OECD's Business and Industry Advisory Council.

Involvement in the Australian Chamber helps local chambers of commerce and national industry associations achieve greater influence in national policy discussion.

#### **Our vision**

For Australian businesses to have an environment for doing business that encourages free enterprise, investment and entrepreneurship, and for businesses to be acknowledged and supported as the creators of wealth, jobs and living standards.

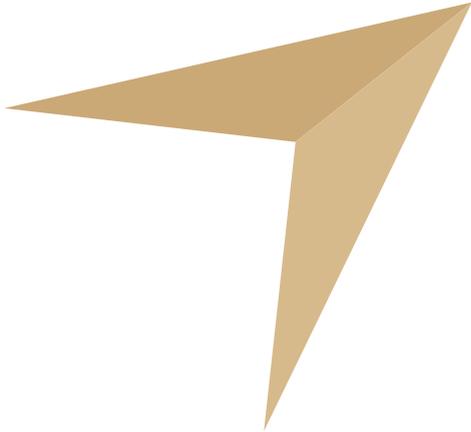
#### **Our mission**

To be Australia's most influential and respected business leadership organisation.

#### **Our values**

A sense of unity of purpose, commitment to excellence, independence in advocacy and integrity in everything that we do.

# NEW CORPORATE IDENTITY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER



THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IS DYNAMIC, INNOVATIVE AND FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE, JUST LIKE THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AUSTRALIAN BUSINESSES IT REPRESENTS.

The Australian Chamber's new corporate identity, launched in August, defines the organisation as it undertakes an exciting period of growth, reflecting the businesses it represents.

The identity builds on the Australian Chamber's position as a bold champion of private enterprise, embracing innovation in its leadership of the Australian business community.

The identity built around the Federation Star, a distinctly Australian design, brings together all parts of the country and takes pride of place on our national flag. Within the star sits a two-tone arrow that points upwards to the future.

The graphic design language supports all communications. The arrow is the focal point, demonstrating leadership and pathways forward or highlighting text, a conversation or an image.

The positioning line, "Working for business. Working for Australia", reflects the mission and vision of the organisation: making Australia more prosperous by improving conditions for the 300,000 Australian businesses employing more than four million people in our member network.

Chambers of commerce and industry based in each state, territory and region can come together under this identity to demonstrate our common purpose. Industry associations can have a stronger voice through enhanced recognition for the national organisation of which they are part. Just like our nation, the Australian Chamber is a federation.

Since the introduction of the new branding the Australian Chamber has revamped its communication products, stationery design, business cards, office branding, website and social media presence. To communicate the Australian Chamber's new identity advertisements were placed in the Australian and the Australian Financial Review.

# NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

The Australian Chamber's national secretariat is the seat of the Chamber's day-to-day activities. It comprises the Australian Chamber's executives, policy advisers, communications and corporate staff.

The Australian Chamber operates secretariats in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney.

## CEO Unit



**Kate Carnell AO**  
CEO



**Sharryn Waite**  
Executive Assistant to  
the CEO

## Administrative Support



**Michelle Fischetti**  
Administration Assistant



**Steve Hatzis**  
Administration Assistant



**Sarah Lyngstad**  
Business Trainee

## Corporate Affairs Unit



**Rozanne Crawford**  
Company Secretary,  
Director Corporate  
Services



**Kathryn Lee**  
Financial Controller



**Charlotte Russell**  
Finance Administration  
Manager

## Communications Unit



**Ari Sharp**  
Senior Manager Media



**Sarah McGregor**  
Senior Manager  
Marketing and  
Communications



**Celia Logue**  
Communications and  
Events Coordinator

## Economics and Industry Policy Unit



**John Osborn**  
Director Economics  
and Industry Policy



**Tim Hicks**  
Senior Economist



**Ali Rahman**  
Industry Policy  
(until November 2015)



**Marcela Bernal De Castro**  
Research Officer &  
Committee Secretary

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## Employment, Education and Training Unit



**Jenny Lambert**  
Director Employment  
Education and Training



**Stephen Bolton**  
Senior Adviser -  
Employment Education  
and Training



**Kevin O'Loughlin**  
Manager Employment  
and Partnerships

## Trade and International Affairs Unit



**Bryan Clark**  
Director Trade and  
International Affairs



**Imogen Reid**  
Senior Adviser Trade and  
International Affairs; Project  
Manager, IORA Women's  
Economic Empowerment



**Andrew Willcocks**  
Senior Adviser Trade  
Facilitation

---

## Workplace Relations Unit



**Richard Clancy**  
Director Workplace  
Relations



**Alana Matheson**  
Deputy Director  
Workplace Relations



**Dick Grozier**  
Associate Director  
Workplace Relations

## Work Health and Safety



**Carolyn Davis**  
Director Workplace  
Safety and Workers'  
Compensation

---

## Productivity Unit



**Adelina La Vita**  
Business Engagement  
Manager



**Zoe Piper**  
Manager Productivity  
Unit



**Amanda Ogilvie**  
Communications  
Officer



**Kirsten Lawarik**  
Administration and  
Events Officer



**Paul Nicolaou**



**Nerida Pearson**

## Business Leaders Council

# GOVERNANCE

The Australian Chamber is a not-for-profit membership-based organisation that is governed by its Constitution. The Board is responsible for corporate governance including strategic direction and monitoring of organisational performance.

State and Territory Chamber and Industry Association members determine policy positions through their participation on our five policy Committees and through General Council.

Directors meet as a Board on a regular basis throughout the year. During the year the Board met on seven occasions, in addition to a strategic planning meeting.

An Executive Management Group, an Audit and Risk Committee, a Remuneration Committee and a Service Awards Committee are in place. These Committees operate under Charters approved by the Board.

## Australian Chamber Board

Nominations for appointment to the Board are made in accordance with our constitution and Office Bearers are elected by members at the Annual General Meeting.

At the 2014 Annual General Meeting, Peter Hood from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia was re-elected President and Terry Wetherall from NSW Business Chamber was re-elected Deputy President, both for a second term of 12 months.

## Our Board comprises:



**Peter Hood**  
President  
Chair of the  
Remuneration  
Committee



**Terry Wetherall**  
Deputy President  
Chair of the Audit and  
Risk Committee



**Richard Holyman**  
Immediate Past President  
Chair of the Service  
Awards Committee and  
the Branding Committee



**Kate Carnell AO**  
Australian Chamber CEO  
Chair of the Executive  
Management Group



**The Hon Mark Birrell**  
President Victorian  
Employers' Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry



**Stephen Cartwright**  
CEO NSW Business  
Chamber  
Chair of the Workplace  
Relations Policy Committee



**Anthony Dormer**  
President NSW Business  
Chamber  
Chair of the Economics  
and Industry Policy  
Committee



**Tracy Horton**  
President Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry  
of Western Australia  
Chair of the Employment,  
Education and Training  
Committee



**Steve Knott**  
CEO Australian Mines and  
Metals Association



**Mark Stone**  
CEO, Victorian Employers  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry  
Chair of the Trade and  
International Affairs  
Committee



**Deidre Willmott**  
CEO, Chamber of  
Commerce and Industry WA  
Chair of the Sustainability  
Policy Committee

## Executive Management Group

The Executive Management Group (EMG) was established to provide support to the Board in achieving objectives identified in the Strategic Plan and to foster the development of a strong national chamber movement. The EMG consists of the CEOs of the State and Territory Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

CEO Kate Carnell AO is Chair, and Director Economics and Industry Policy John Osborn acts as Committee Secretary.

## Audit and Risk Committee

The role of the Audit and Risk Committee is to monitor the management of operational and business risks and to provide advice to the Board in relation to corporate governance.

The Committee ensures the reliability of financial reports and is also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the external audit and internal controls, and it also has oversight of our investments.

Committee members are drawn from the Board, with a Chair selected from among the committee members.

Deputy President Terry Wetherall is Chair of the Committee, and Directors Kate Carnell AO, Peter Hood, Richard Holyman and Steve Knott are members of the Committee.

The Committee met on four occasions during the financial year.

Independent audit services are provided by KPMG, who have verified that the annual accounts provide a true and fair picture of our finances and operations for the last financial year.

The external auditor is required to make an annual declaration of independence.

A policy of rotation of audit partners is in place and this is the second year that the current audit partner has been responsible for the external audit.

The Committee met with the KPMG during the annual review process, without management present, and KPMG attends the Annual General Meeting to address any member questions.

Company Secretary Rozanne Crawford acts as Committee Secretary.

## Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee was established to ensure that remuneration arrangements for senior executives support our strategic objectives and the recruitment motivation and retention of senior executives.

President Peter Hood is Chair of the Committee. Company Secretary Rozanne Crawford acts as Committee Secretary.

## Service Awards Committee

The Service Awards Committee considers potential candidates for an Award to formally recognise exceptional service to the Australian Chamber and its members.

A Service Award was presented during the year to Anne Bellamy the award recognised outstanding service for over 26 years, and particularly as the principal advocate for the Australian private sector on all matters concerning health and safety regulation and, in later years, harmonisation.

Immediate Past President Richard Holyman is Chair of the Committee. Company Secretary Rozanne Crawford acts as Committee Secretary.

## Policy Committees

The following policy committees operated during the year:

- Economics and Industry Policy
- Employment Education and Training
- Workplace Relations Policy
- Work Health and Safety
- Trade and International Affairs
- Sustainability Committee

## General Council

Our policy-making forum is General Council. General Council is attended by senior office-bearers and executives from the Australian Chamber's member organisations, the Board and senior executives.

Council is advised by a network of policy committees and working parties which meet between Council meetings.

Council's core business is to determine policy on current issues providing a mandate for advocacy on matters of importance to the business community.

General Council meets three times each year, on a national rotating basis. During the year, General Council met in Canberra in November 2014, Sydney in March 2015, Perth in July 2015.

President Peter Hood is Chair of General Council.

# GENERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER HOSTS THREE GENERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS A YEAR TO PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR MEMBER CEOs TO DEBATE AND COORDINATE THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER'S POLICY POSITION ON A RANGE OF MATTERS AFFECTING BUSINESS. TO HELP FACILITATE DISCUSSION AND INFORM THE GROUP INFLUENTIAL BUSINESS LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, PAST AND PRESENT ARE INVITED TO SPEAK.

## November 2014

Coinciding with the Australian Chamber's end of year celebration, the Annual General Meeting final General Council meeting for 2014 was held on November 27. The meeting was addressed by the at the time Minister for Industry the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, Deloitte Access Economics partner and prominent economist Chris Richardson and ABC senior political journalist Sabra Lane.



Minister Macfarlane spoke about the Competitiveness Agenda and energy issues. Chris Richardson gave us a preview of the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) forecasting a 2014-15 deficit of \$34.7 billion, \$4.9 billion worse than Treasurer Hockey's May forecast. He showed us that reducing commodity prices, stagnant wage growth, increasing expenditure in areas such as aged care, NDIS and health, and difficulties getting budget cuts through the Senate would likely deliver budget deficits into the future. Sabra Lane gave us a fascinating insider's view of how the Senate was struggling to work and how the Government and Opposition are travelling. The new policy and reporting format was also discussed at the General Council and the Australian Chamber Policy Committee Restructure was approved.



## March 2015

The March General Council Meeting took place at the NSW Business Chamber Office. Richard Gibbs, Global Head of Economics at the Macquarie Group, provided the council with an Economic and Investment overview, Dr Martin Parkinson, former Treasury Secretary, provided his views on the Tax White Paper and Terry Moran, Former Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and President of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA), turned the General Council's attention to the Federation white paper looking at how to stop overlap and duplication between the Commonwealth and the states.

Bob Carr, former NSW Premier and Foreign Affairs Minister addressed Australian Chamber members of the General Council Dinner, hosted by the NSW Business Chamber at the Opera Point marquee.



## July 2015

It was opportune in July to take General Council to Perth, where the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia (CCIWA) hosted the meeting and dinner. Topics discussed included iron ore prices, productivity, the WA economy, federation reforms and Australia's free trade agreements.

Meeting in Western Australia allowed members to hear from experts in the mining industry such as Peter Meurs, Director Development at Fortescue Metals Group and John Langoulant AO former Under Treasurer of WA's Court and Gallop Governments, sharpened the Australian Chamber's attention on the Australian economy's transition after the long resources boom. Darryl Daisley, Principal at AXUM, Peter Hartley BHP Billiton Chair of Economics at UWA and Bryan Clark Australian Chamber Director of Trade and International Affairs participated in a panel facilitated by Mark Stone Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO to delve into trade liberalisation efforts and their impacts on the Australian economy.

At the Corporate Leaders Dinner we hosted with Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA) on Tuesday night we were addressed by the Hon Colin Barnett MLA, the state premier. In his speech Mr Barnett praised CCIWA on a variety of issues, including its campaign to reduce penalty rates, and invited CCIWA to deliver an annual briefing to the cabinet.



# AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP NETWORK

THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER IS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST AND MOST REPRESENTATIVE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, COMPRISING STATE AND TERRITORY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND NATIONAL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS. WE SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The Australian Chamber's membership comprises state and territory chambers of commerce and national industry associations.

Member CEOs and senior managers use their membership to better inform themselves on policy matters and shape economic and social policy.

Our policies encourage productivity, employment and growth to benefit businesses, employees and communities. We work with communities to improve understanding and with legislators to enact policy.

The Australian Chamber through a targeted membership drive experienced a period of growth throughout 2015, and have welcomed 20 new industry association members to join the mission to make Australia a better place to do business.

During 2015, the Australian Chamber's membership included:

## Chamber of Commerce and Industry Members



Business SA



Canberra Business Chamber



Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland



Chamber of Commerce & Industry Western Australia



Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory



NSW Business Chamber



Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce & Industry



Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce & Industry

# Industry Association Members



Accord – Hygiene, Cosmetic and Specialty Products Industry



Aged and Community Services Australia



Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors' Association



Association of Independent Schools of NSW



Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association



Australian Beverages Council Limited



Australian Dental Association



Australian Dental Industry Association



Australian Federation of Employers and Industries



Australian Federation of Travel Agents



Australian Food and Grocery Council



Australian Hotels Association



Australian International Airlines Operations Group



Australian Made Campaign Limited



Australian Mines and Metals Association



Australian Paint Manufacturers' Federation Inc.



Australian Recording Industry Association



Australian Retailers Association



Australian Self Medication Industry



Australian Steel Institute



Australian Veterinary Association



Bus Industry Confederation



Commercial Radio Australia



Consult Australia



Cruise Lines International Association

## Industry Association Members (cont.)



Customer Owned Banking Association



Direct Selling Association of Australia



Exhibition & Event Association of Australasia



Fitness Australia



Housing Industry Association



Large Format Retail Association



Live Performance Australia



Master Builders Australia



Master Plumbers & Mechanical Services Association of Australia



Medical Technology Association of Australia



National Disability Services



National Electrical and Communications Association



National Fire Industry Association



National Retail Association



National Roads and Motorists' Association



New South Wales Taxi Council



Oil Industry Industrial Association



Pharmacy Guild of Australia



Phonographic Performance Company of Australia



PACIA



Printing Industries Association of Australia



Restaurant and Catering Australia



Screen Producers Australia



Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce

# BUSINESS LEADERS COUNCIL

THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER BUSINESS LEADERS COUNCIL WAS LAUNCHED IN APRIL. THE COUNCIL, AIMED AT PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR BUSINESSES TO DIRECTLY ENGAGE WITH AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ACTIVITIES BY FACILITATING ACCESS AND NETWORKING BETWEEN THE CORPORATE SECTOR AND FEDERAL LEGISLATORS AND POLICY MAKERS, HAS ATTRACTED OVER 20 MEMBERS IN LESS THAN 12 MONTHS.

A busy calendar of events in major cities has provided an opportunity for the exchange of ideas among participants and has created invaluable networks among members and political leaders.

2015 membership of the Australian Chamber Business Leaders Council included:

## Business Leaders Council Members



Allied Express



Australian Hearing



BRI Ferrier



Brown & Chase



Corrs Chambers Westgarth



Certica



Commonwealth Bank



Echo Entertainment



Employers Mutual



EP&T Global



Google Australia & New Zealand



Intralot Australia



Isentia



Ive Group



JLL Australia



Murrays Australia



Paynter Dixon



PremierState



Samsung Australia & New Zealand



Southern Cross Group Services



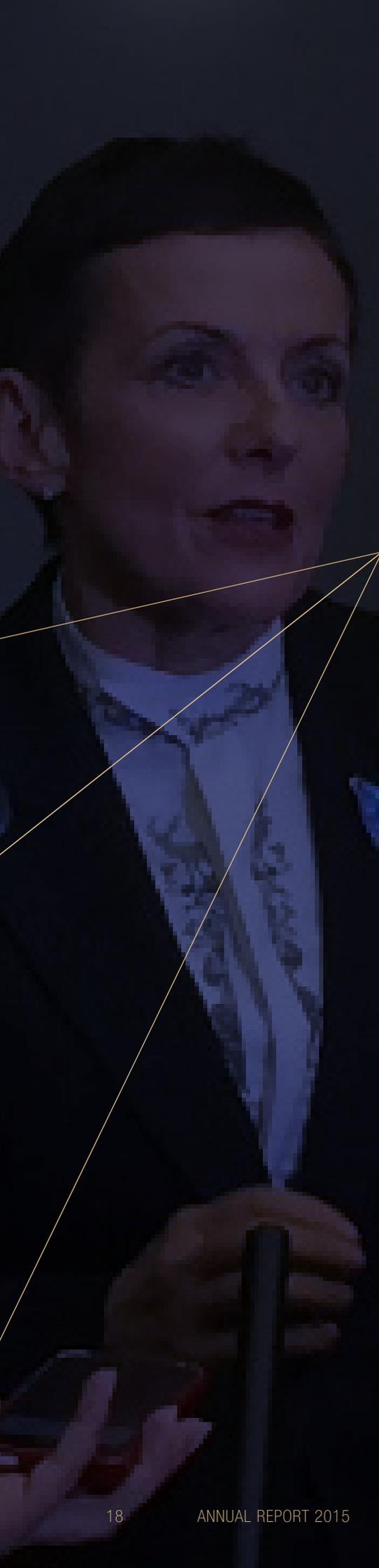
Star Ratings Australia



Thorn Group



Universal Business School Sydney



# MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER IS A LEADING VOICE IN PUBLIC DEBATE, ADVOCATING POLICIES THAT MAKE IT EASIER FOR BUSINESSES TO INVEST, GROW AND EMPLOY STAFF. TO ADVANCE OUR PUBLIC ADVOCACY EFFORTS, THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER IN JANUARY EMPLOYED AS SENIOR MEDIA MANAGER ARI SHARP, A JOURNALIST WITH EXPERIENCE COVERING BUSINESS AND POLITICS. THROUGHOUT THE YEAR THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER HAS TAKEN A PROMINENT POSITION IN NATIONAL CONVERSATIONS ON ISSUES INCLUDING TAX REFORM, FREE TRADE, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND COMPETITION POLICY.

Early in the year media officers from Australian Chamber members were invited to join the Communications Working Party (CWP), which was revitalised to coordinate the efforts of the network, share information and learn from each other.

The CWP coordinated activities surrounding workplace relations reform in the context of the Productivity Commission inquiry into the issue. The Australian Chamber's Kate Carnell debated the president of the ACTU at the National Press Club, where she put the case for greater flexibility. The pair later debated the issue on ABC television and undertook media appearances in a variety of outlets.

Over Easter the Australian Chamber worked with the New South Wales Business Chamber to highlight the impact of excessive public holiday penalty rates on businesses, staff and customers. The campaign encouraged businesses to put up posters explaining why they were operating with reduced staff, limiting their opening hours or shutting their doors. The message was also spread via traditional and social media. The issue was given prominence in the Daily Telegraph, Herald Sun, ABC, Smart Company and other media outlets.

The March visit of Dr Arthur Laffer, a former economic adviser to US President Reagan who came as a guest of the Australian Chamber, generated significant media coverage. Dr Laffer was featured on ABC television, 3AW, the Australian Financial Review, the Daily Telegraph and The Australian explaining the economic benefits of tax cuts.

For the Federal Budget in May the Australian Chamber produced Budget in Brief and

Budget in Depth reports within hours of the Budget's release, ensuring members had access to quick and reliable analysis.

The hot topic in June was competition policy reform, with the Australian Chamber's submission in response to the Competition Policy Review gaining traction. Kate Carnell was extensively reported across a range of media outlets urging the government to implement the proposed reforms, including those relating to the misuse of market power.

In July the Australian Chamber joined forces with the Minerals Council of Australia and the National Farmers' Federation to explain the benefits of the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA). This involved advertising on television, radio, in print and online, as well as a public relations campaign that showcased the opportunities provided by the trade deal for Australian small businesses and regional communities.

The Australian Chamber's Business Leaders Summit and participation in the National Reform Summit generated many headlines in August. The Business Leaders Summit in Canberra was addressed by the Hon Joe Hockey MP, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, the Hon Bruce Billson MP, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, as well as several prominent business leaders. Key speeches from the event were broadcast live on Sky News and ABC News 24, and there was also extensive print media coverage.

The National Reform Summit in Sydney in August brought together business, labour and community leaders to seek consensus on reform. Areas for discussion included tax, federation and retirement incomes.

Kate Carnell's address to the event was broadcast live on television and reported extensively. "Sitting on our collective hands as a nation and spending more money than we raise in tax is not sustainable," she told the gathering.

Following the change in national leadership in September the Australian Chamber took to the airwaves to thank the outgoing Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, and welcome his successor, Malcolm Turnbull. Kate Carnell led the print coverage for the business reaction to the leadership change:

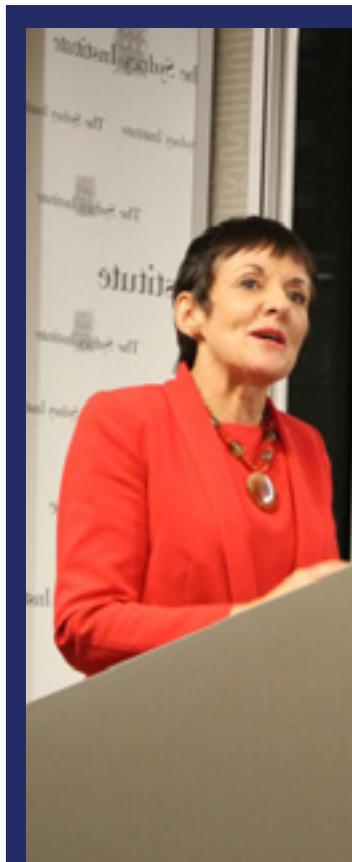
"The three-year, sometimes less, political cycle simply isn't long enough to really manage any real reform. And so you desperately need to have a government with a very solid, very directional focus ... focused on having the right policy settings in place to ensure that Australia can be globally competitive going forward, which means things like tax reform. Australia needs leadership that understands the country must live within its means and prepare its economy for the challenges ahead."

*The Australian*, September 15, 2015

The first months of Prime Minister Turnbull's leadership heralded significant debate on a range of potential reforms, including to tax, competition policy and workplace relations. The Australian Chamber took a leading role in debate, putting the case for reforms that would ensure Australia remains internationally competitive. Kate Carnell joined with other participants from the National Reform Summit in meeting with the Prime Minister and his senior ministers around the Cabinet table, an event that received substantial media coverage.

Looking to 2016 the team is looking forward to developing and implementing the Australian Chamber's federal election communications strategy.

"The first months of Prime Minister Turnbull's leadership heralded significant debate on a range of potential reforms, including to tax, competition policy and workplace relations."



Throughout the year CEO Kate Carnell delivered several significant speeches, including an address to the Sydney Institute on strategies to improve Australia's international competitiveness, an address at the National Reform Summit and a National Press Club debate with ACTU President Ged Kearney.

**Opinion pieces** by Ms Carnell were published in forums including the Financial Review, The Australian, The Drum, Australian Outlook and the Huffington Post.

Media appearances across 2015 reached a cumulative audience of 71 million people and achieved an equivalent to \$14.5 million in advertising spending. On social media, the number of engaged users on our Facebook page remained steady with 24,000 and the reach of our content hit 1.4 million users.





# ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY

**THE MAJOR CHALLENGE FACING AUSTRALIA TODAY IS HOW TO BEST SECURE ECONOMIC REFORM IN A CLIMATE SEEMINGLY DOMINATED BY REFORM INERTIA. THAT IS WHY THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ADVANCES ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRY POLICY SETTINGS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINED GROWTH AND PROSPERITY.**

The Australian Chamber's advocacy focuses on enabling greater entrepreneurship and investment by reducing government barriers to growth and enhancing national productivity. This process relies on close engagement with member organisations and businesses to underpin compelling and evidence based policy development and campaigning.

## **REPRESENTING MEMBERS TO ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT**

The Australian Chamber continued to conduct regular meetings on economic matters with key policy-makers during the year. These meetings have been a crucial part of the Chamber's strategy to ensure that the needs of Australian business are taken into consideration and addressed.

Maintaining an effective working relationship with key government, opposition and crossbench leaders ensures that the concerns of business are made known to policy-makers at the highest level, and that Australian Chamber members are kept abreast of the latest political developments and their potential impact on government policy.

## **DRIVING SOUND PUBLIC POLICY REFORM**

To highlight just some examples of strong advocacy over the past year, the Australian Chamber has:

Helped secure of the repeal of the economically damaging carbon tax in July 2014 and the mining tax after years of consistent and forceful advocacy.

Played a key role in development of the 2015 National Reform Summit in Sydney and worked with other peak groups on a communique of reform priorities. Earlier in the year we joined with other business organisations to author a statement calling on our political leaders

to stand on the shoulders of the past giants of economic reform and ensure our living standards remain among the highest in the world. The statement was reported prominently across the media.

Developed comprehensive submissions to the Federal Government's Tax White Paper process providing policy support for a more efficient, productive and equitable tax system. This leadership was acknowledged by the highest levels of the Australian Treasury.

Hosted internationally renowned economist and former Reagan and Thatcher advisor Dr Arthur Laffer, to advance the case for pro-growth tax reform. Dr Laffer met with political leaders in Canberra and corporate leaders in Sydney and Melbourne. He also spoke at events hosted by the Sydney Institute and the Institute of Public Affairs and to a range of senior gallery journalists. In his meetings and many media appearances, Dr Laffer explained how reducing tax rates can stimulate economic growth and even increase tax revenue.

Advanced a package of competition reforms designed to strengthen protections for small business against unfair contracts and improve enforcement against anti-competitive conduct; including changes to misuse of market power laws, secondary boycott rules and trading restrictions in industrial agreements.

Commissioned a major modelling exercise by Deloitte Access Economics on the economic impact and inefficiency of the Renewable Energy Target (RET), and called for major reform with a reduction to at least a 'real 20%'. We helped secure a major reduction in the RET from 41,000GWH to 33,000GWH, for which we were acknowledged in Parliament.

Continued to work with government to formulate and implement innovation and competitiveness reform.

'The Australian Chamber led a range of targeted briefings with key Ministers and senior departmental decision makers to advance the interests of members and free enterprise in Australia.'

“If you tax people that work, and you pay people that don't, don't be surprised to see a lot of people not working.”  
 Dr Arthur Laffer, Australian Financial Review, March 18, 2015

Advocated on behalf of members to address concerns regarding the Australian Taxation Office's Single Touch Payroll initiative. Following our advocacy the government withdrew a proposal to increase the frequency of PAYG withholding instalments.

Supported the launch of reforms to strengthen protections for small business against unfair contracts with the Hon Tony Abbott MP and Minister for Small Business the Hon Bruce Billson MP in Victoria.

Australia's longest running economic survey the Australian Chamber-Westpac Survey of Industrial Trends provides insights into manufacturing industry trends. The results show overall conditions in manufacturing improved significantly in 2014-15, centred around new orders output and overtime. Manufacturing is benefitting from the significant easing of monetary conditions. A strong home building upswing is underway in response to lower interest rates. The sharply lower Australian dollar is benefitting exporters and import competing firms.

investment sentiment, while also polling businesses on actual outcomes and expectations for other economic data. However, due to difficulties in ensuring an appropriately representative sample, the decision was made at the beginning of 2015 to discontinue the survey in order to focus resources on the other surveys in the portfolio.

The Australian Chamber National Red Tape Survey conducted in 2014 and published early 2015 continued to highlight the red tape burden on Australian businesses and provide compelling examples and data relating to red-tape constraints. The survey highlighted the impact that unnecessary regulation is having on business productivity. Nearly half of respondents reported that the impact of regulation had prevented them from making changes to grow their business, more than one in four respondents said they spent 11 hours a week or more on compliance, and almost one in two put the annual cost of compliance at beyond \$10,000.

The Australian Chamber Business Expectations Survey is a national survey, aggregated from individual surveys of business conditions and expectations that are conducted by Australian Chamber member associations around Australia. The Survey covers firms in every mainland state and in every industry, incorporating firms of every size. The Survey showed that the business expectations for the performance of the Australian economy fell steadily alongside their perceptions of the performance of their own businesses, entrenching both these indicators in negative territory. The indexes for actual sales and profits improved for the last 6 months of 2014, but fell for two consecutive quarters in 2015 to remain largely unchanged over the year.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

Over the coming year, the Economics and Industry Policy unit will continue to make important submissions and advocate for reform covering the:

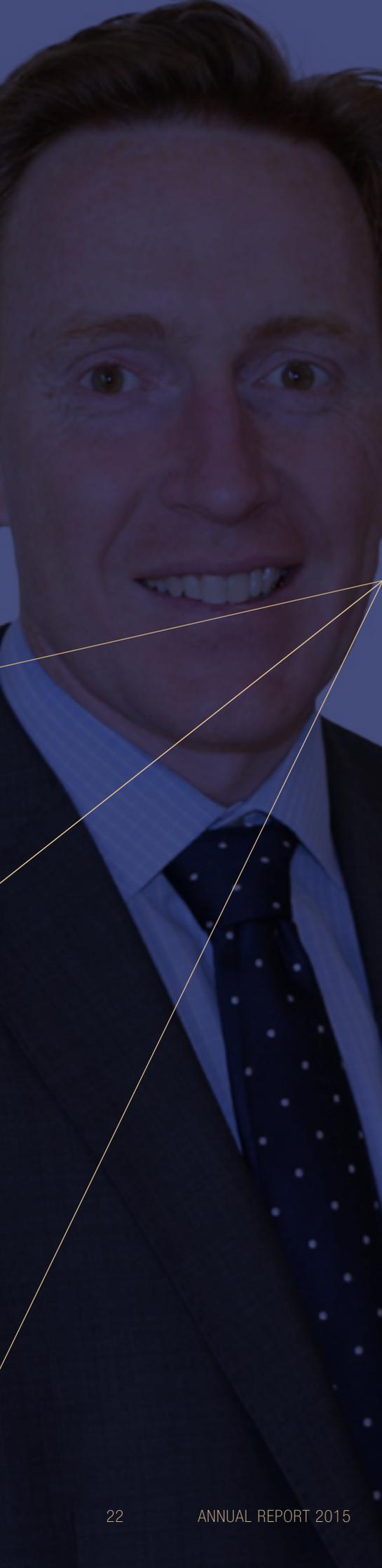
- White Paper on Tax Reform and retirement incomes policy;
- White Paper on the Reform of the Federation;
- Competition Policy Review;
- Innovation and Competitiveness Reform;
- Infrastructure and cities policy;
- White Paper on Energy; and
- 2016 Federal Election.

The Australian Chamber Small Business Survey allows a comparison between conditions in small, medium and large businesses. Its primary aim is to gauge business conditions within firms that employ fewer than 20 employees, which represent a crucially important – but often hidden – segment of the national economy. The surveyed showed that the perceptions of small businesses in 2014-15 regarding business conditions and the expected performance of the economy were similar to the experience of large businesses. Indexes sales and profits for small and medium businesses also declined slightly throughout the year. The up and down movement in the overall indexes was driven by sharp changes in the reported results for larger businesses.

The Australian Chamber Survey of Investor Confidence focused heavily on business

## AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER'S LEADING ECONOMIC SURVEYS

The Economics and Industry Policy unit has continued to produce a suite of Australia's leading economic surveys. These serve to inform the public about evolving economic conditions, business expectations and the views of business in relation to contemporary policy issues.



# WORKPLACE RELATIONS

**THE EXPECTATIONS OF AN EXTREMELY BUSY YEAR FOR WORKPLACE RELATIONS GOING INTO 2015 HAVE CERTAINLY BEEN REALISED. DOMINANT AMONGST OUR VARIED UNDERTAKINGS HAS BEEN THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION (PC) INQUIRY INTO THE WORKPLACE RELATIONS FRAMEWORK AND OUR CONTINUED STRONG ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS IN THE FOUR YEARLY REVIEW OF MODERN AWARDS. ADDED TO THESE EFFORTS HAS BEEN OUR ADVOCACY IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGE, NUMEROUS SUBMISSIONS TO PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES, TEST-CASE LITIGATION, INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND REGULAR LIAISON WITH DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS, STATUTORY BODIES, THE FAIR WORK COMMISSION (FWC) AND THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER'S GROWING MEMBERSHIP.**

Five issues papers were released to commence the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the workplace relations framework in late January 2015. The Australian Chamber filed a comprehensive submission in response in March 2015, taking up the invitation 'to consider the type of system that might best suit the Australian community over the longer term', and sought a range of reforms. We advocated a simplified safety net to underpin bargaining and a full suite of agreement making options, including individual statutory agreements. We called for a small business exemption from the unfair dismissal laws, stronger controls around the taking of industrial action, more balanced right of entry rules and the protection of the flexibility available through contracting, labour hire and part time and casual employment.

A draft report was released by the PC in August 2015. Many of our suggested reforms were adopted in recommendations made but on the whole, the PC took a more conservative approach than we would have liked, recommending 'repair, not replacement'. After further consultation and public hearings, a supplementary submission was filed and the PC's final report is expected to be delivered to the Government by the end of November 2015. The Australian Chamber's call for a more flexible, streamlined safety net, rationalised award content, broader agreement-making options and bargaining based on cooperative relationships and mutual interests was maintained.

In the Four Yearly Review of Modern Awards, the Australian Chamber assumed the lead role in the representation of employers in annual leave common issue proceeding. This enabled a strong defence to union claims to be mounted and ultimately secured greater flexibility for employers. A similar approach was taken in defending union claims for accident make-up pay and district allowances. Our aim has been to present defences that are co-ordinated and focussed while holding the ACTU and its affiliate unions to greater account. The defence to an ACTU claim for 10-days paid leave for victims of family & domestic violence and related provisions is underway, as is the response to claims for a range of new entitlements and restrictions sought in relation to part time and casual employees. These cases will stretch into 2016. Additionally, the Australian Chamber worked with a number of members (the Australian Retail Association, National Retail Association, Australian Hotels Association, Pharmacy Guild and NSW Business Chamber) to ensure they could present their penalty rate cases and made extensive submissions to the PC inquiry in pursuit of penalty rate reform.

The Australian Chamber's litigation also extended to 'test cases' in the Federal Court involving the interpretation of rules applying to the payment of annual leave loading, the accrual of leave while on workers' compensation and the validity of district allowances.

“Our aim has been to present defences that are co-ordinated and focussed while holding the ACTU and its affiliate unions to greater account.”

A fresh approach was taken to the Annual Wage Review. There are inherent challenges for employers in this process due to the legislative framework but the Australian Chamber succeeded in paring back the ACTU claim for \$27 per week, with the final award being a \$16/2.5% per week increase to the minimum wage and a 2.5% increase to Modern Award pay rates.

The Government's workplace relations legislative agenda has been met with resistance in the Senate. This has been frustrating but we nonetheless remain optimistic that progress can be made during 2016. The Bills required submissions to and appearances before parliamentary inquiries.

The Australian Chamber thanks Senator the Hon Eric Abetz for his nearly 6 years in the Employment Portfolio, including the last two years as Minister. Senator Abetz always made himself available to the Australian Chamber for policy discussion. We also congratulate Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash on her promotion to Cabinet as Employment Minister and look forward to working closely with her in the pursuit of further important workplace relations reforms such as the restoration of the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).

Other significant submissions prepared have addressed the Trade Union Royal Commission, a House of Representatives inquiry into inhibitors to employment for small business, the Victorian parliament's inquiries into portable long service leave and labour-hire, the review of workplace gender equality reporting, the Senate Community Affairs Committee inquiry into the Fairer Paid Parental Leave Bill 2015 and the post-implementation review of the Fair Work Amendment Act 2013.

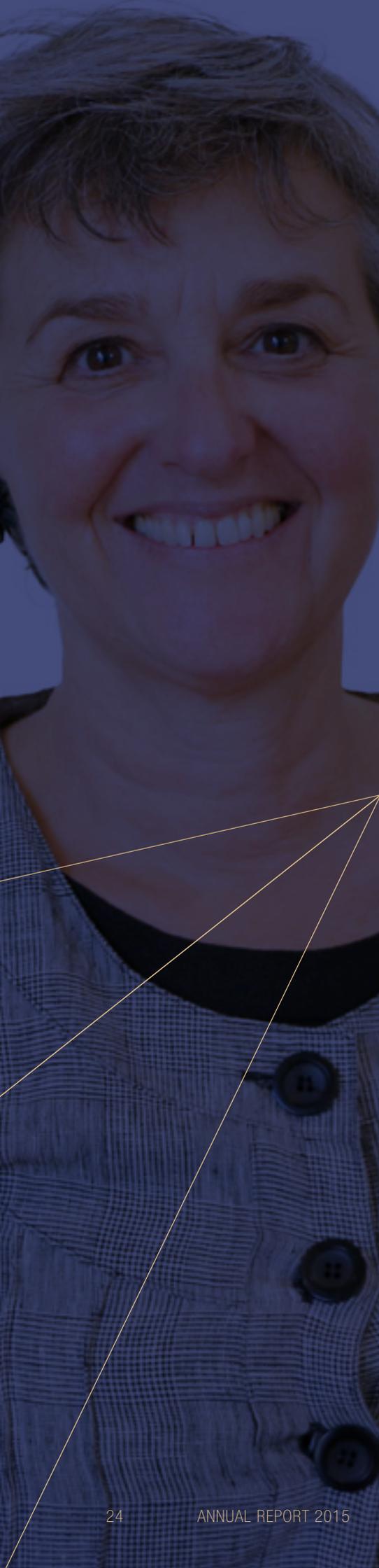
The Australian Chamber has also maintained its leadership role in representing members and Australian business on the National Workplace

Relations Consultative Committee (NWRCC), the International Labour Affairs Committee (ILAC) and in relation to Superannuation issues. In June 2015, the Australian Chamber represented Australian employers at the 104th Session of the International Labour Conference at the ILO participating in discussions regarding SMEs, the transition from the informal to formal economies and the strategic objective of social protection (labour protection). Positive working relationships were maintained with the FWC and the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO).

Finally, the Australian Chamber's Workplace Policy Committee met on three occasions during the year under the very effective leadership of Australian Chamber Board Member, Stephen Cartwright. Discussions were broad ranging, debate was stimulating and tremendous feedback was provided by committee members to support our work. Ultimately, our capacity to undertake such a wide range of activity would not have been possible without the strong support of the Australian Chamber Board and the ongoing dedication of our members to the pursuit of workplace relations policy reform. We look forward to the challenges that 2016 holds.



Richard Clancy, Australian Chamber Director, Workplace Relations participating in a Q and A session with Eric Abetz and Australian Chamber member Samantha Read, PACIA CEO.



# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

**THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER HAS LONG MAINTAINED THAT GOOD WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY IS FUNDAMENTAL TO A SUSTAINABLE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS. WE REMAIN A STRONG VOICE FOR BUSINESS ON VARIOUS RELEVANT NATIONAL FORUMS, MOST SIGNIFICANTLY THROUGH SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA (SWA).**

Over the course of the past twelve months the Australian Chamber has collated the views of members and has represented employers in the review of legislation on a range of national work health and safety and workers compensation matters.

We have achieved much during the review of work health and safety model legislation, requested by the Council of Australian Government and we have contributed constructively to the development of a national framework for explosives.

There have been specific outcomes on several topics; deemed diseases, return to work and the review of various guides such as the *Guide for Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying* and the national review on current approaches to using workplace exposure standards.

The Australian Chamber chaired a SWA Construction Regulation Review Workshop on September 10, 2015. This tripartite meeting discussed specific regulation issues within the construction industry and defined the definitions of what is deemed construction work, construction projects, monetary thresholds and Safe work method statements and training. This work in this space will continue into 2016.

Members of the Australian Chamber have provided direct input into SWA reports and research on construction, transport and manufacturing. Recent SWA publications include the *Cost Work related injury and illness for Australian Employers Workers and Community and Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities Australia*.

The Australian Chamber represented employers on particular issues including on high-risk work licensing, plant, work design, diesel exhaust, vibration and others, some of which are now published as information sheets.

The work of the Chamber has included contributions to the Australian Workplace Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022 and active involvement in SWA Virtual Seminar Series for Safe Work Month in October.

Carolyn Davis, Director of Workplace Safety and Workers Compensation, opened SWA Month by taking part in a live panel discussion on *Becoming a Mentally Healthy Small Business* and presented at conferences such as the annual Workers Compensation Summit and participated in member events and committees.

We continue to shape policy and put the view of employers to the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA) and council, with our members on National Industrial Chemicals and Notification Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) and other forums. The ASEA National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Management and Awareness has now been published and the Consultations on Review of NICNAS has started.

The Australian Chamber continues to have key roles in the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance including the promotion of Heads Up, a campaign designed to educate businesses on the benefits of mentally healthy workplaces. Our network of Heads Up Co-ordinators has been actively involved in sharing the resources on mentally healthy workplaces provided by *beyondblue*.

Through the Work Health and Safety & Workers Compensation Committee and network, our members have learned from experts on important topics such as alcohol and drugs and global chemicals and have heard from speakers from the Safety Institute of Australia, CodeSafe, SWA and other organisations.

The Australian Chamber will continue to canvas members' views and to represent our members on national bodies in the coming year.

“The Australian Chamber continues to have key roles in the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance including the promotion of Heads Up, a campaign designed to educate businesses on the benefits of mentally healthy workplaces.”




**“National Safe Work Month is a time to highlight improvements made over the past year and look for ways to make things even better. An improved safety culture benefits everyone.”**  
 Kate Carnell | CEO

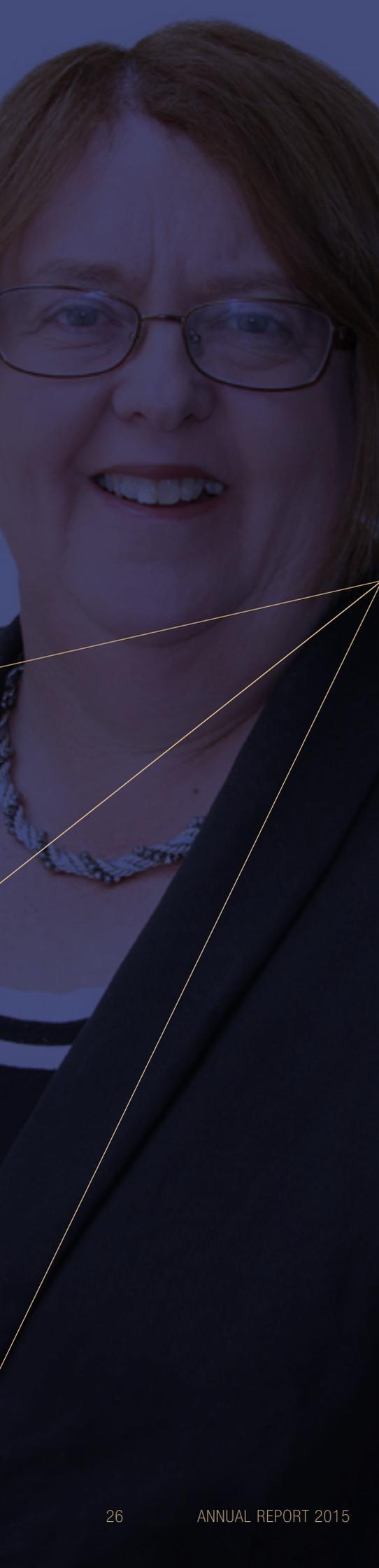
  
 Working for business. Working for Australia



Director Workplace Health and Safety and Worker's Compensation, Carolyn Davis address during Safe Work Australia month



Australian Chamber Heads Up Coordinators



# EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

IT HAS BEEN A BUSY YEAR FOR THE EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING PORTFOLIO WITH ACTIVITY ACROSS ALL ASPECTS OF THE PORTFOLIO.

## Vocational Education and Training

Reform of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system and apprenticeships remain a key focus, with policy work at a high level connected to reform under the Federation agenda, and in the detail around training package development and design.

As the 2015 year commenced, the Australian Chamber's Director of Employment, Education and Training, Jenny Lambert was appointed to the new Australian Industry and Skills Council and an apprenticeship advisory board which was asked by the Minister to focus on incentives, pre-apprenticeship training and alternate pathways. The Australian Chamber also participated in the working group reviewing the quality standards for training providers, which have subsequently been signed into law.

Engagement with the Minister and Department about VET has been strong throughout the year. The Australian Chamber and the NSW Business Chamber co-hosted the first public address by Simon Birmingham in his then new role as Assistant Minister for Education and Training.

The event attracted over 130 business leaders and was arranged with a weeks' notice. Assistant Minister Birmingham's chief of staff met with the Employment, Education and Training Committee in February to discuss training package development, and a senior departmental delegation and the Minister's Chief of Staff met with the Committee again in August.

Two submissions were made on national training packages, one on the process for their development and the other on their content, with extensive consultation with the Assistant Minister for Education. The Australian Chamber ensured industry's voice was heard on the development of training

packages by taking up an appointment to the industry working group to advise the Federal Government on the process for selecting new Skills Service Organisations to replace the Industry Skills Councils.

The Employment, Education and Training Unit has also participated in the VET in schools taskforce convened by the Assistant Minister for Education which resulted in the sign off of a final document by the Education Ministerial Council entitled Preparing Secondary Students for Work. In 2015, the focus on this work changed to Vocational Learning and Training at schools and has produced a range of useful interpretative tools.

## Higher Education

In Higher Education, the prospect of reform and the need to increase work integrated learning dominated the national agenda. The Australian Chamber provided a submission and appeared before the Senate Hearing into the Higher Education Reforms. Our submission gained media attention via an opinion piece in the Australian Financial Review in March, where Jenny Lambert explained the continued need for higher education reform despite the Senate's rejection of the Government's proposal.

Progress is being made on the National Strategy on Work Integrated Learning, which involves tertiary students gaining more practical experience. A forum on the issue was held in June, hosted by business and university organisations, including the Australian Chamber.

The Australian Chamber participated in consultations on the Federal Government's International Education Strategy, including lodging a submission, attending two forums and securing a position on the Coordinating Council for International Education.



Left: Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion, Minister for Indigenous Affairs launching the *Employ Outside the Box* guide to employing Indigenous Australians with Deidre Willmott Australian Chamber Board Member, Peter Hood Australian Chamber President and Kate Carnell AO, Australian Chamber CEO.

## Employment

On the employment policy front, the Federal Government's roll out of the new Job Active service on 1 July 2015 was a major change. The new system rewards providers who achieve job outcomes but is not without risk. The Australian Chamber continues to advocate for a stronger focus on employers.

A highlight in the employment area was the announcement of a partnership with Campbell Page, which enables the Australian Chamber to provide a free recruitment service to employers through our Employment and Partnerships Manager Kevin O'Loughlin that will bridge the gap between industry and publicly funded employment services.

This was a key recommendation of the Australian Chamber's *Employ Outside the Box* initiative. In November, as part of the same initiative we launched the guide to employing Indigenous Australians.

Youth unemployment remained a strong focus in 2015, and we joined with the NSW Business Chamber to convene a meeting of members with the NSW Minister for Skills, Jon Barilaro, to identify solutions to youth unemployment.

The Australian Chamber also attended a youth unemployment forum convened by the NSW Business Chamber, and we provided input into the youth engagement initiatives announced in the Federal Budget. Our proposal for "Training to Work – an alternative to work for the dole" is inclusive of strategies to find jobs for young people and involving placements in microbusinesses was strongly advocated, with a more detailed program developed. Kate Carnell and Jenny Lambert met with Ministers Eric Abetz, Luke Hartsuyker and Scott Morrison, and shadow minister Kate Ellis, to discuss both the work for the dole and childcare positions in our pre-budget submission.

## Migration

Migration policy saw a great deal of activity, particularly around Free Trade Agreements. The Australian Chamber made a submission to and attended a consultation on the review of skilled migration. The Government's response to the Integrity review of the 457 visas was broadly welcomed by the Australian Chamber and its members, and we lodged a submission to the Federal Government's integrity review of the training fund contribution system. We also made a submission into the Senate inquiry into temporary migration visas.

Much of the public debate surrounding the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement focused on labour market issues. We undertook a detailed analysis of the issue, included key messages in our media strategy and prepared a briefing summary sent to all members of parliament.

## Whole-of-Portfolio Issues

Finally, a couple of issues which cut across the Employment, Education and Training portfolio also received attention. Firstly, the Australian Chamber jointly convened with the Careers Industry Council of Australia a significant stakeholder forum in December on Career Development, which highlighted how this issue has fallen off the radar in terms of federal government policy, and the critical need for an informed market. Secondly, at the invitation of the Prime Minister, the Australian Chamber participated with of the Ambition in the Government's competitiveness agenda relating to a skilled workforce. Kate Carnell was Deputy Chair in the roundtables associated with the Agenda, in addition to a significant part of the Employment, Education and Training Committee meeting in November being set aside to provide direct input.



Then Assistant Minister for Education and Training addressing 130 business of his first public speech, co-hosted by the Australian Chamber and the NSW Business Chamber

"The uncapped demand-driven system has made higher education accessible to students from all economic backgrounds. But the increased cost to the government is impossible to sustain, in the current budget environment and in the future."  
- Jenny Lambert, Australian Financial Review, March 20

# PRODUCTIVITY UNIT

IT HAS BEEN AN INVIGORATING 12 MONTHS FOR THE PRODUCTIVITY UNIT, WITH A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS COMING TO FRUITION DELIVERING SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES. THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN DIRECTION FOR THE PROGRAM, DUE TO A SHARPENING OF THE FOCUS ON WORKPLACE RELATIONS, AND ENGAGING BUSINESSES THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE “BIZ BETTER TOGETHER” CAMPAIGN.

## General Activities

Through the last quarter of 2014, the Unit continued to manage productivity initiatives related to retail, electrical contracting, bus transport, printing, services export, aged care, work integrated learning, road transport and automotive repair.

The Unit conducted training in partnership with Google targeted at assisting small business to make full use of the internet to be found online. Initially, the events aimed at targeting 40 small businesses in regional areas in five different states being Frankston, Dubbo, Launceston, Sunshine Coast and Subiaco. The road show was very successful attracting over 100 small businesses to each event. The program was increased to visit Canberra, Darwin and Adelaide and Google and the Australian Chamber are now in discussions about up-scaling the national training to Australian Chamber Industry associations.

At the start of 2015, the Productivity Unit commenced a new productivity initiative around building information modelling technology (BIM) and worked with the Centre for Workplace Leadership to deliver the annual 'Future of Work' Conference, which was held in Melbourne on April 29-30. Planning for the 2016 Future of Work Conference, in partnership with the Centre for Workplace Leadership, is underway.

We established a Small Business Working Group to reinforce The Australian Chamber's position of influence as the voice of small business. At the inaugural meeting in June we presented an update on the Productivity Unit.

In conjunction with the Australian Chamber Workplace Relations Unit, a professional development workshop was delivered to members in Canberra on August 18.



Minister Bruce Billson MP addressing small business owners at the Australian Chamber-Google training event.



Productivity Unit Team: Kirsten Lawarik, Zoe Piper, Amanda Ogilvie and Adelina La Vita.

### **New direction for the Unit**

A review of the direction of the fund was commenced in late 2014 to improve synergy with other Australian Chamber activities, support workplace policy objectives and maximise outcomes from the fund.

A New Milestones and Deliverables plan was developed out of the review and was submitted to the Department of Employment in late January, and extensive discussions followed. The new plan, finally approved in May, focused on a “conversation” with businesses, both through the Australian Chamber and directly, on how workplaces will be managed and regulated in the future. The proposal included events, workshops, a revamped website, social media and a mobile app. Significant funding was allocated to provide content for the dialogue and to assist in the development of workplace policy. The terms of the funding continues to require the key focus be business improvement.

To implement the new plan the Unit was expanded to include three new staff, commencing from the middle of the year. These are the Business Engagement Manager Adelina La Vita, a campaign and marketing expert; Communications Officer Amanda Ogilvie, a writer and communications professional; and Administration and Events Officer Kirsten Lawarik, an existing Australian Chamber employee who was internally promoted.

The new Productivity Unit team, in association with partners, developed a research and content plan, and commissioned research into flexible workplaces to provide the basis of an engagement plan with business.

### **Biz Better Together Launched**

The new Productivity Unit team also set to work to develop an engagement plan including a range of events and workshops, campaign theme and materials to maximise impact on target businesses and in October, launched the campaign “Biz Better Together” with a new website [www.bizbettertogether.com](http://www.bizbettertogether.com) and social media accounts for Twitter (@BizBT) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/bizbettertogether](http://www.facebook.com/bizbettertogether)).

The first of the event initiated under “Biz Better Together” will be held at the end of 2015, with the inaugural Mobile-ising Women in Business, to be held at Doltone House at Jones Bay Wharf in Sydney on December 9. This will

kick-start a series of events of the same theme around Australia to roll out across 2016.

The Unit is now underway preparing a full program of training and events, including options for regional events, that will run over the remainder of the funding period until 30 June 2017.





# TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

THE PAST YEAR HAS SEEN THE CRYSTALLISATION OF SEVERAL YEARS OF EXTENSIVE TRADE POLICY WORK BY THE TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS UNIT, CULMINATING IN DIRECT COMMERCIAL BENEFITS TO AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS THROUGH WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO'S TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT, AND NEW FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS (FTA) WITH JAPAN, KOREA, CHINA AND THE RECENT TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP.

We continue to work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in their ongoing trade negotiations with India, Indonesia, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Service delivery for Australian importers and exporters under Trade Facilitation principles has included working directly with Japan, Korea and Chinese Customs to provide smooth and globally compliant documentation systems to access the new FTA. We have also been working with the International Chamber of Commerce to harmonise documentary requirements in our region, particularly Certificates of Origin and Rules of Origin, to remove regulatory burdens and speed up cross-border trade in the global trading context. Additionally, there is forward

movement towards the development of an Asia-Pacific mediation competition that develops the skills of young mediators.

There have also been significant advancements in the area of the Indian Ocean Rim initiative in the area of Women's Empowerment. The Australian Chamber's Women Mean Business project visited Indonesia to consult with the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN) and meet with government officials to map the course of action in Indonesia, one of three markets selected for the DFAT-funded project. Other visits included South Africa, Dubai, Seychelles and Italy. These outreach meetings gathered crucial information regarding systems in place in each destination, and formed



Bryan Clark, Australian Chamber Director Trade and International Affairs at the IORA Business Forum in Jakarta, Indonesia in October 2015.

# ICC ROUNDTABLE ON COMPETITION POLICY

linkages between and amongst groups of business women operating in each economic environment. The forward plan is implementation of a global program that will increase trade and digital literacy across the Indian Ocean Rim region, driven by women in business. The Australian Chamber is extremely proud to be in partnership with DFAT in the delivery of these outcomes.

Engagement with members and a network of trading SMEs in the form of front-line data surveys further consolidates the Australian Chamber's reputation as Australia's most representative business organisation. The 2016 Trade Survey, a core component of our research, was prepared in partnership with the University of South Australia. The university undertook analysis of the qualitative components of the survey. Previous surveys have been an invaluable tool in the trade advocacy activities of the unit, and have resulted in real policy outcomes that directly commercially benefit our membership and the broader business community.

The Australian Trade Centre concept continues to gather momentum via high-level interest in the university sector, underpinned by ongoing increased interest by Government. The Centre aims to assist Government policy making and trade negotiators with the area of trade and investment, by bringing together Australia's independent academic experts with industry bodies and corporate stakeholders. The Centre sits above Australia's tertiary institutions as a meta-body, providing trade analysis, opinion, and utilising the vast but disparate expertise available across Australia, to the benefit of Australian business.



**IN APRIL, THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (ICC) HELD THE ICC ROUNDTABLE ON COMPETITION POLICY, WHICH SAW PARTICIPANTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD DISCUSSING ISSUES SUCH AS ANTI-TRUST COMPLIANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESS, BEST PRACTICES IN PRE-MERGER CONTROL AND THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT REVIEWS.**

The event hosted by the ICC and ICC Australia, the Australian national committee of the global organisation, coincided with the 14th International Competition Network (ICN) Annual Conference.

Comprising of over 300 experts on competition law, including legal advisors from industrial and commercial enterprises and lawyers in private practice, from 40 countries, the ICC Commission on Competition ensures that modern business needs and markets are taken into account in the formulation and implementation of competition laws and policies. The commission contributes business expertise and experience to the work of the ICN in areas of competition policy implementation, unilateral conduct, cartels and mergers. In addition, it contributes the business perspective to international discussions on due process principles in competition law.

Participants on the Roundtable included:

- Kate Carnell, CEO of the Australian Chamber
- Paul Lugard, Chair of the ICC Competition Commission (Belgium)
- Rod Sims, Chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Anne Riley, Group Antitrust Counsel at Shell International Limited (Britain)
- Anny Tubbs, Chief Compliance Officer at Unilever Legal Group (Belgium)
- Patrick Hubert, Partner at Clifford Chance Europe (France)
- Hardin Ratshisusu, Acting Deputy Commissioner/Head of Mergers and Acquisitions at Competition Commission South Africa
- Calvin S. Goldman QC, Partner at Goodmans (Canada)
- Andrew McBride, Acting Chief Compliance Officer at BHP Billiton (Britain)



# WOMEN MEAN BUSINESS PROJECT

THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IS LEADING “WOMEN MEAN BUSINESS”, A JOINT PROGRAM WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE THAT LEVERAGES THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NETWORK TO SUPPORT AND ADVANCE WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ACROSS THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM. THIS PROJECT IS SPEARHEADED BY DR IMOGEN REID, AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER SENIOR ADVISER, TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND PROJECT MANAGER, WOMEN MEAN BUSINESS.

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) was officially established in 1997 and has 21 member countries and seven observer states - each at different stages of economic and social development, representing diverse cultures, language and political systems. Despite this, members and observers are united in their acknowledgement of the opportunities the Indian Ocean region offers.

The Indian Ocean is the world's third largest ocean. It carries two thirds of the world's oil shipments, one third of the world's bulk cargo and half of the world's container ships, and represents a third of the world's population.

As part of its mandate, IORA has committed to advancing six priority areas: maritime security and safety, trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, disaster risk management, academic, science and technology, and tourism and social exchange. An overarching priority for IORA is women's economic empowerment - an issue affecting each member to varying degrees.

The significance of this issue has been championed by Foreign Minister Julie Bishop during Australia's chairing of IORA (2013-15). The reality is that empowering women across the region is not only the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do. Numerous articles and research reports have detailed the economic and social gains from empowering women.

In Australia the Grattan Institute in 2012 estimated that achieving a six-percentage-point increase in female participation rates, we would add \$25 billion to our GDP.

According to research produced by the former Goldman Sachs JB Were, narrowing the gap between male and female employment rates would have large implications for the global economy – in Australia it would boost our GDP by 11 per cent.

In a speech delivered at the National Press Club as part of a Committee for Economic Development of Australia event on women in leadership, Imogen Reid mentioned a series of studies by academics Carter and Wagner who found that companies with the most women board directors outperformed those with the least. Return on Sales was 16 per cent higher and Return on Invested Capital was 26 per cent higher.

On the basis of the funding received from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Chamber will focus on three select markets: Indonesia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Each market reflects both geographic groupings and the future rotating chairs of IORA until 2019.

In June 2015, a highly successful *Women Mean Business* roundtable was held as part of the World Chambers Congress in Turin, Italy. Attended by over 40 international delegates from across 20 different countries, the consultation highlighted the significance of this issue worldwide. A Statement of Support was signed by over 20 delegates during this meeting, most notably by the International Chamber of Commerce, the Australian Chamber and the Confederation of Asia Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry. All signatories pledged to advance and support women's economic empowerment within their own spheres of influence.

Throughout September to November, site visits and consultations were conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia, Johannesburg and Durban South Africa and Dubai, UAE. These were designed to gather authentic insights into the challenges facing women in these countries, to understand what programs are currently working well, to build relationships with local chambers and business councils and establish connections with key government and commercial players.

We are pleased to report that our initial site visits have demonstrated a strong desire from multiple stakeholders to be involved. It has also confirmed the importance of face-to-face interaction when establishing such a broad and complex international program as this.

We can also report that based on data gathered from the field, *Women Mean Business* will focus on advancing international connectivity, along with trade and digital literacy amongst female business owners. The power of mobile technologies and the internet has allowed anyone with a smartphone and data plan access to international buyers. Our plan is to assist women in business to adapt and grow in an ever changing environment by assisting business owners to leverage mobile technology to advance their businesses and connect with buyers from across the region. This will include a mobile platform and a roll out of locally delivered training related to international trade and all things mobile.

The key is to deliver a legacy within the region and create tangible, lasting benefits to women in business.

Members are invited to become a part of the *Women Mean Business* initiative by registering on dedicated LinkedIn Group: *Women Mean Business*. Members are also welcome to discuss how this project could be made available to your members, including connecting Australian firms to women-led businesses across the Indian Ocean Rim.

“Throughout September to November, site visits and consultations were conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia, Johannesburg and Durban South Africa and Dubai, UAE”



# SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

## THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE WAS FORMALLY ESTABLISHED AT THE JULY 2015 MEETING OF GENERAL COUNCIL.

The Committee considers national and international issues pertaining to sustainability, including environment and climate change policy and regulation, and is chaired by Deidre Willmott, CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, and deputy chaired by Megan Motto, CEO of Consult Australia.

The terms of reference for the Committee outline the Australian Chamber's commitment to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Australian community. The purpose of the Committee is to:

- identify issues of importance for business and industry, relevant to the Committee's scope;
- be an avenue for information exchange, discussion, and consultation on relevant Australian Chamber policy positions and priorities;
- provide advice and feedback to help develop solutions on relevant policy issues relating to business, including trade and development;
- inform the Australian Chamber's policy agenda as being representative of the business community; and
- participate in the Australian Chamber's political engagement and advocacy activities as appropriate.

Although the scope of the Committee extends to social and economic sustainability, given the considerable public debate on climate change and environmental issues in recent years, the Committee has prioritised advocacy on environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability refers to the ability of society to meet the resource and services needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the environment that provides them.

To guide its consideration of issues related to environmental sustainability, the Committee has developed a set of principles for environmental

sustainability. The Committee considers that environmental sustainability is necessary as the environment provides a number of resources and services that are essential to human life, the economy and society. Critical resources and services provided by the environment include:

- physical resources, such as food, fibre, biochemicals, pharmaceuticals, fresh water, and energy resources;
- ecosystem services, such as air quality and climate regulation, water purification and waste treatment; and pest, disease and erosion regulation; and
- cultural services, such as the nonmaterial benefits people obtain from the enjoyment of the environment such as recreation and aesthetic experiences.

The Committee's principles for environmental sustainability accentuate the need to balance a healthy environment and economic development, reduce regulatory duplication, make use of market based mechanisms where possible, and to have risk-based and evidence based policy making.

Since its establishment, the Committee has contributed to the Australian Chamber's advocacy on Australia's 2030 Emissions Target and One-Stop Shops for Environmental Approvals in each state and territory.

A priority for the Committee is to keep a watching brief on the UN Climate Change Negotiations and any impacts this could have on Australia's targets and policy measures including the scheduled review of the Australian Government Emissions Reduction Fund in 2017-18.

The Committee is interested in ways to facilitate the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to finance smaller energy efficiency projects, and is keen to contribute to the development of the 2xEP program which has a goal of doubling the energy productivity of Australian businesses.

# POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY

OVER 2014-15, AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER HAS PRODUCED A NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS, ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS, ACROSS ALL POLICY FRONTS. THE BELOW SUBMISSIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER WEBSITE;

- Superannuation Legislation Amendment (Trustee Governance) Bill 2015 | Submission to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee, October 2015
- Draft National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (Safeguard Mechanism) Rule 2015, October 2015
- Superannuation Guarantee Legislation Amendment (Simplification) Bill 2015, September 2015
- Submission in Reply | Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Framework, September 2015
- Infrastructure Australia: Infrastructure Audit, September 2015
- Facilitating crowd-sourced equity funding and reducing compliance costs, September 2015
- Joint Select Committee on Trade and Investment Growth | Answers to Questions on Notice, September 2015
- Harmonising Administrative Procedures in Preferential Trade Agreements to Support Trade Facilitation, September 2015
- China-Australia Free Trade Agreement Submission to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, August 2015
- Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption, August 2015
- Fairer Paid Parental Leave Bill 2015, August 2015
- 457 Integrity Review: Training Fund Contribution, August 2015
- Joint Select Committee on Trade and Investment Growth Inquiry into the Business Experience in Utilising Australia's Free Trade Agreements, July 2015
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics' Inquiry into Home Owners, June 2015
- Too Big to Ignore – World Chambers Competition nomination, June 2015
- Post-implementation review of the Fair Work Amendment Act 2013, June 2015
- Re:think Taxation Discussion Paper, June 2015
- Response to Competition Policy Review Final Report, May 2015
- Senate Education and Employment References Committee Temporary Work Visa Programs, May 2015
- Setting Australia's post-2020 target for greenhouse gas emissions, April 2015
- ACCI's response to the exposure draft 2015 Measures No 4 Bill, April 2015
- ACCI Submission in Reply | Annual Wage Review 2014-2015, April 2015
- Australia's membership to the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), April 2015
- Annual Wage Review Submission 2014-15, March 2015
- Review of the Export Market Development Grants Scheme, March 2015
- Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Framework, March 2015
- Single Touch Payroll | ACCI's response to the ATO's discussion paper, March 2015
- Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee on the Commonwealth's Treaty-Making Process, March 2015
- Higher Education and Research Reform Bill, February 2015
- Review of Training Packages and Accredited Courses, February 2015
- Productivity Commission Inquiry - Business Set-up Transfer and Closure, February 2015
- 2015-16 Pre-Budget Submission, February 2015
- Senate Economics References Committee: Infrastructure Provision and Financing, January 2015
- Industry Engagement in Training Package Development, December 2014
- Response | Competition Policy Review: Response to Draft Report, November 2014
- Energy Green Paper Response, November 2014
- Legislative proposal to amend the Customs Act (1901), November 2014
- Unfair Contract Terms Protections for Small Business, November 2014
- Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Amendment (Pass Through of Employee Details) Regulation, November 2014

# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS



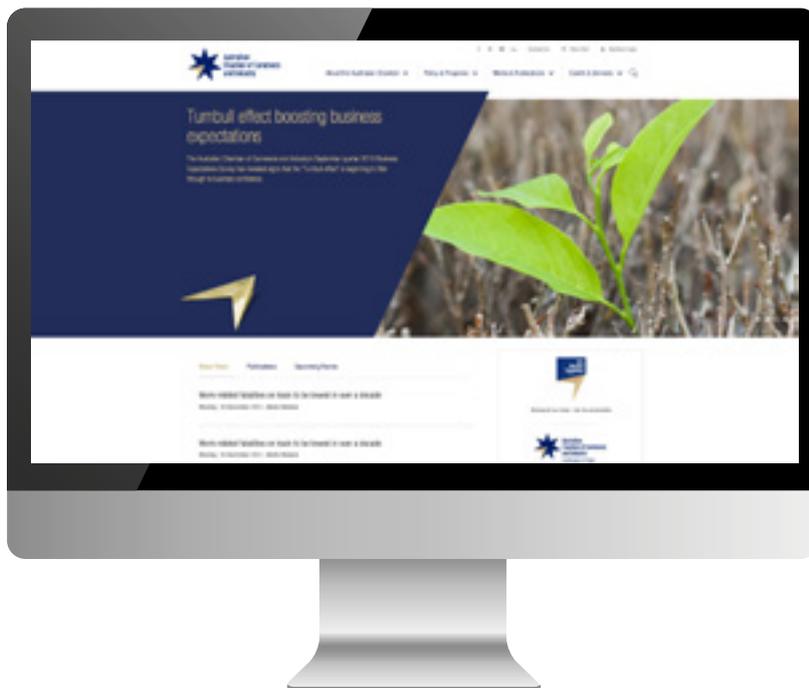
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, WHICH INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP SERVICES, IS THE CORNERSTONE OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER'S WORK. THESE SERVICES INCLUDE THE EFFECTIVE AND PROMPT COMMUNICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER'S POSITION ON A RANGE OF ISSUES AFFECTING BUSINESS TO MEMBERS, GOVERNMENTS AND THE PUBLIC THROUGH MEDIA.

The work in this area also extends to delivering a wide range of events, developing partnerships that benefit members and finding new and innovative ways to deliver services.

Throughout 2015, the marketing and communications department has delivered the following membership services:

- Weekly member only CEO Updates, providing personal commentary from the Australian Chamber CEO on national issues affecting business, along with analysis from Australian Chamber policy directors.
- Publication of the Australian Chamber's premier tri-annual magazine, Commerce and Industry, including contributions from members and distributed in hard and soft copy in March, July and November to over 1200 contacts and all members of parliament.
- Produced quarterly Activities and Achievements publications to continuously communicate the Australian Chamber's activities on behalf of members.
- Facilitated members input into Australian Chamber policy positions and submissions through the delivery of Policy Committee meetings.
- Hosted three successful General Council Meetings in March, July and November to provide the platform for members to debate and agree on Australian Chamber policy positions.

- Provided member access to timely economic data via our quarterly economic surveys.
- Launched the Australian Chamber's new corporate identity to reposition the Australian Chamber as the strong, innovative and dynamic leader of the business community in Australia.
- Delivered a new website with powerful communication and events functions and a customer relationship management system to better manage the organisations expanding membership and activities.
- Established the Business Leaders Council to provide a platform for businesses to become direct members of the Australian Chamber, and welcomed over 20 business to the exclusive group.
- Welcomed over 20 new industry association members into the Australian Chamber member network.
- Produced over 16 successful networking events for the benefit of members to obtain exclusive access to federal politicians, bureaucrats, senior policy makers, leaders of regulatory authorities.
- Developed relationships and projects with Google Australia and Zealand to deliver a national road, in conjunction with state and territory chambers, to help business get online and make the most of the internet.
- Partnered with sponsors and Business Leaders Council members and associations to provide marketing opportunities in the form of event sponsorship and advertising, improving the resourcing available for the Australian Chamber to provide these vital services for its members.



Hary Ozkoch from Anny's Jewellers gets some tips during the Google-Australian Chamber roadshow



# 2014 ANNUAL DINNER

OVER 300 AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER MEMBERS AND GUESTS ATTENDED THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ANNUAL DINNER AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY IN NOVEMBER 2014.

Sponsored by MYOB, the Australian Made Campaign, the Mark Agency and 3 Degrees Marketing, the evening provided a forum for the business community to coalesce for the first time following the federal election.

Guests heard from then Prime Minister of Australia, Tony Abbott, who declared Australia was 'open for business'.

Chris Uhlmann, host of ABC's AM radio program was MC for the evening and guests were welcomed by the Australian Chamber President, Peter Hood, Chair of Apollo Gas Pty Ltd.

The dinner was followed on by the Australian Chamber Annual General Meeting and General Council policy forum, during which time Australian Chamber members discussed the government's Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda with the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, then Minister for Industry.



# 2014 EXPORT AWARDS

## 2014 National Winners

### **GP Graders (VIC)**

Australian Exporter of the Year

### **Australian Agricultural Company (QLD)**

Agribusiness Award

### **Bega Cheese (NSW)**

Regional Exporter Award

### **Blast Movement Technologies (QLD)**

Minerals, Energy and Related Services Award

### **Cardno (QLD)**

Business Services Award

### **Charles Darwin University (NT)**

Education and Training Award

### **GP Graders (VIC)**

Manufacturing Award

### **Halfbrick (QLD)**

Online Sales Award

### **Opmantek (QLD)**

Information and Communication Technology Award

### **SDI Limited (VIC)**

Health and Biotechnology Award

### **The Creature Technology Company (VIC)**

Creative Industries Award

### **TTG Transportation Technology (NSW)**

Environmental Solutions Award

### **Turbosmart (NSW)**

Small Business Award



THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY CELEBRATED AUSTRALIAN EXPORTING ENTREPRENEURS AT THE 52ND ANNUAL EXPORT AWARDS IN SYDNEY IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR.

The event was hosted by the Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Robb AO MP and was attended by the 74 small to medium-sized enterprise finalists, who together generated \$3.1 billion in export earnings and employed 41,000 people, which the 12 winners were chosen from.

Australian Chamber President Peter Hood presented the award for Environmental Solutions to TTG Transportation Technology, from NSW. TTG's Energymiser® Driver Advisory System is proven technology that enables passenger and freight train companies to reduce their environmental impact, with the System advising train drivers in real time to ensure energy use is minimised while still making certain the train arrives on time.

Bryan Clark, Australian Chamber Director of Trade and International Affairs presented the award for Creative Industries to The Creature Technology Company (CTC), from Victoria.

Through the Export Awards program the Australian Chamber has played a vital role over the past 52 years in celebrating and recognising business people who have risen to the challenge of the global market.

# BUSINESS LEADERS SUMMIT

MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER WERE INVITED TO A DAY OF IDEAS AND INSIGHTS FROM LEADING FIGURES IN AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS, POLITICS AND MEDIA ON MONDAY 17 AUGUST 2015.

The inaugural Business Leaders Summit in Canberra attracted ministers Joe Hockey, Julie Bishop and Bruce Billson, assistant minister Josh Frydenberg, and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten to join with members and supporters of the Australian Chamber to discuss our key economic challenges.

The landmark event for the Chamber, sponsored by Google Australia and New Zealand and Isentia, attracted extensive media attention and gave participants an opportunity to engage in discussion on ideas as diverse as economic reform, workplace relations, technology for small business, productivity and political communications.

Sessions at the Summit included the following panel discussions:

- “Achieving sustainable economic growth amid global headwinds”, featuring Australian Chamber CEO Kate Carnell (chair), Assistant Treasurer the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Macquarie Group Chairman Kevin McCann AM and JP Morgan Managing Partner and Head of Fixed Income and FX Strategy, Sally Auld.
- “Inside the press gallery: understanding political communication”, featuring Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA CEO Deidre Willmott (chair), ABC broadcaster Michael Brissenden, Sunday Telegraph National Political Editor Samantha Maiden and Isentia Manager Ian Parry-Okeden.
- “Modernising workplaces for a changing economy”, featuring Australian Chamber Workplace Relations Director Richard Clancy (chair), Australian Institute for Business and Economics Director Professor Paul J. Gollan and Roy Morgan Research CEO Michele Levine.
- “Australia’s productivity challenge”, featuring NSW Business Chamber President Tony Dormer (chair), Minister for Small Business the Hon Bruce Billson MP, Productivity Commission Chairman Peter Harris AO, Google Australia and New Zealand Managing Director Maile Carnegie and PwC Partner Jeremy Thorpe.

Summit attendees were then joined by a number of members of parliament and senators at a cocktail party in the Mural Hall of Parliament, where Australian Chamber CEO Kate Carnell launched the new corporate identity of the Chamber.



# DR ARTHUR LAFFER VISIT



IN MARCH, THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER HOSTED INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED ECONOMIST AND FORMER REAGAN AND THATCHER ADVISOR DR ARTHUR LAFFER, TO ADVANCE THE CASE FOR PRO-GROWTH TAX REFORM. DR LAFFER MET WITH POLITICAL LEADERS IN CANBERRA AND CORPORATE LEADERS IN SYDNEY.

He also spoke at events hosted by the Sydney Institute and the Institute of Public Affairs. In his meetings and many media appearances, Dr Laffer explained how reducing tax rates can stimulate economic growth and even increase tax revenue.

# 9TH WORLD CHAMBERS CONGRESS, TORINO

ALONG WITH OVER 1,600 DELEGATES FROM 120 COUNTRIES, MORE THAN 30 DELEGATES FROM VARIOUS AUSTRALIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE ATTENDED THE 9TH WORLD CHAMBERS CONGRESS IN TORINO, ITALY DURING JUNE 2015.

The Australian Chamber featured strongly in the programme with CEO Kate Carnell co-present a workshop on networking and our Senior Trade Facilitation Advisor, Andrew Willcocks, being a panellist at a WCC forum on the future of rules of origin. Imogen Reid, Women's Economic Empowerment Project Manager launched "Women Mean Business" which promotes women's economic empowerment through the Indian Ocean and Pacific Rim Regions, at a highly regarded round table event.

The Congress also included several International Chamber of Commerce events such as the ICC World Council meeting where John Denton, Partner and CEO of Corrs Chambers Westgarth and Australian Chamber Business Leaders Council member, was elected to the executive board of the ICC and to the Permanent Heads Committee meeting which allows ICC National Committees to update the secretariat on their country's work.

Australia won the bid to host the next World Chambers' Congress which will take place in Sydney in September 2017 and will be spearheaded by the Sydney Business Chamber. With many of the chambers of commerce from around the world already planning to attend, this event is already shaping up to be a huge opportunity for Australian business to showcase what we do best to the world.



# AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER BUSINESS LEADERS EVENTS



## **The Hon Tony Abbott MP, then Prime Minister of Australia** **Wednesday, April 15, 2015 – Sponsored by Isentia, Sydney**

The Australian Chamber was privileged to host the Prime Minister at a lunch for captains of industry, members of parliament and other community leaders in Sydney in April. About 320 guests, including many representatives from industry associations and chambers of commerce, heard the Prime Minister outline the challenges faced by the Government in framing its second Budget.

Prime Minister Abbott told the gathering that there were “clear signs of strength” in the economy, with improving jobs growth, household spending and housing approvals. He declared the 2015 Federal Budget would be “responsible, measured and fair” and focus on “jobs, growth and opportunity”. The Prime Minister stated that “the deficit will decline every year”, a step in the right direction but one that could be more ambitious given the need to return to surplus. Encouragingly, the Prime Minister said that “there will be no new spending that’s not offset against savings”.

The luncheon coincided with the Launch of the Australian Chamber’s Business Leaders Council, a platform for businesses to become directly involved in the Chamber’s activities.



## The Hon Joe Hockey MP, then Treasurer Luncheon

**Monday, May 18, 2015 – Co-hosted with the NSW Business Chamber, Sydney**

In a post Federal Budget event, the then Treasurer attended an Australian Chamber and NSW Business Chamber luncheon in Sydney to outline the government's commitments in the Budget to help small businesses through tax relief, wage subsidies, free trade agreements and other measures. The luncheon was attended by many chamber, industry and Business Leaders Council members and their guests.

The Hon Joe Hockey MP identified tremendous opportunities for Australian businesses given our proximity to Asia, home to more than half the world's population. He noted that the services sector account for 70 per cent of our economy but just 17 per cent of our exports, indicating enormous potential for growth. He explained how the government's childcare policies would help improve female workforce participation, a focus the Australian Chamber long called for.



Photo Credit: Tom Lane.

## The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, then Assistant Treasurer

**Friday, May 29, 2015 – Hosted by Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Sydney**

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, then Assistant Treasurer addressed Australian Chamber members at a luncheon in Sydney hosted by Corrs Chambers Westgarth. The luncheon, the first of many Business Leaders events for 2015, was an exclusive opportunity for many members to meet Mr Frydenberg directly.



**Professor K C Chan,  
Secretary for Financial  
Services and the Treasury,  
Government of the Hong  
Kong Special Administrative  
Region**

**Wednesday, July 29, 2015 - Hosted by  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Sydney**

During a visit to Australia Professor K C Chan, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury from the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, was attended a luncheon that was held in conjunction with Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in Sydney and the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Professor Chan discussed the economic and financial services cooperation between Australia and Hong Kong, Hong Kong's role as China's global financial centre and Hong Kong's latest economic outlook.

Professor Chan's presentation was followed by a Q&A with Catherine Chow, Partner, Chinese Services Group, Deloitte Private. Guests in attendance included Arthur Au, Director, Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office, host Robert Regan, Sydney Managing Partner, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Reserve Bank Board member Roger Corbett AO, fashion icon Carla Zampatti AC, and the vote of thanks was moved by Senator the Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO, representing the Federal Government.



**Mr Chris Jordan AO,  
Commissioner of Taxation,  
Australian Tax Office**

**Friday, July 31, 2015 - Hosted by J.P.  
Morgan, Sydney**

Australia's Tax Commissioner, Chris Jordan AO addressed a gathering of senior business leaders at a luncheon for the Australian Chamber Business Leader Council members and participated in an informative Q and A with the Chamber's CEO, Kate Carnell. Discussion focused on the strategic plan for the ATO and its need for innovation to better meet the expectations of the community whilst delivering on its commitments to the government. The vote of thanks was moved by Lauretta Stace, Chief Executive Officer, Fitness Australia.

Guests in attendance included host, Luke Palmerlee, Executive Director, J.P. Morgan, former NSW Premier, the Hon John Fahey AC, and former Federal Minister & Deputy Chairman REX Airlines, the Hon John Sharp.



## Professor Ian Harper, Economist and Chair of the Competition Policy Review Panel

**Tuesday, August 11, 2015 - Hosted by  
Deloitte, Sydney**

Professor Ian Harper joined Australian Chamber guests in Sydney for a breakfast hosted by Deloitte. Attendees found Professor Harper's fervent discussion of the Competition Policy Review Report (the Harper Review), fascinating and informative. Australian Chamber CEO, Kate Carnell further explored the findings of the report during a Q and A session with Professor Harper.

Breakfast guests in attendance included senior representatives from many member organisations of the Australian Chamber's Business Leader Council, host Dennis Krallis, Sydney Managing Partner, Deloitte and Terry Wetherall, Deputy President, Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, who gave the vote of thanks.



## Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, then Minister for Employment & Leader of the House in the Senate

**Wednesday, August 26, 2015 -  
Hosted by Deloitte, Melbourne**

A senior Minister in the Abbott Government, Senator the Hon Eric Abetz joined Australian Chamber members and guests for an informative luncheon in Melbourne. Senator Abetz discussed challenges for the Australian economy focussing on issues for both employers and employees and important initiatives for the portfolio.

Senator Abetz then participated in a panel discussion with Richard Clancy, Director of Workplace Relations, Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry which was moderated by Samantha Read, CEO, Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association. The vote of thanks was moved by Ian Macdonald from the Bus Industry Confederation. The Australian Chamber's Business Leader Council members were also joined by host, Vik Khanna, Partner Tax, Deloitte Melbourne and Sally Capp, Chief Operating Officer, Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



## Dr Paul Sheard, Chief Global Economist at Standard & Poor's Ratings Services

**Tuesday, August 25, 2015 - Hosted by Standard & Poor's Ratings Services, Sydney**

US based Standard & Poor's Ratings Services Chief Global Economist, Dr Paul Sheard, took time out from his trip to Australia to give an exclusive briefing to senior Australian Chamber's Business Leader Council members in Sydney. Dr Sheard discussed his views and Standard & Poors research into the global economic outlook, world markets, Greece's debt crisis and the outlook for the U.S economy. The Australian Chamber's Director of Economic and Industry Policy, John Osborn, then joined Dr Sheard for a Q and A session further probing into the Standard & Poor's research and Dr Sheard's observations.

Mr Daniel Antman, Director, Investor Communications Asia-Pacific, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services hosted the afternoon tea and briefing for Australian Chamber's Business Council Leader members. The vote of thanks was moved by Tony Dormer, NSW Business Chamber President.



## Future Direction of Tourism in Australia Panel Discussion

**Friday, October 2, 2015 – Hosted by Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Sydney**

Australian Chamber members enjoyed a breakfast and lively panel discussion on the future direction of tourism in Australia comprising John O'Sullivan, Managing Director, Tourism Australia, Ann Sherry, Chief Executive Officer, Carnival Australia, John Hart, Chair, National Tourism Alliance & moderated by Kate Carnell, CEO, Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

The panel discussed the impacts and challenges for this important sector and its effect on the Australian economy incorporating their collective wealth of practical experience and insights into tourism. Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, the newly appointed Minister for Tourism in the Turnbull Government, addressed guests and spoke of his desire as Minister to work with tourism industry leaders and stakeholders.

During the breakfast Kate Carnell announced the formation of the Australian Chamber's National Tourism Council, which will incorporate the peak policy and advocacy roles of the National Tourism Alliance (NTA).

Merivale Group Chief Executive Officer, Justin Hemmes, former Federal Minister and Non-Executive Director, Crown Resorts Limited, the Hon Helen Coonan, and host Robert Regan, Sydney Managing Partner, Corrs Chambers Westgarth also joined the Australian Chamber's Business Leader Council members.



## The Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP, Minister for Small Business, Assistant Treasurer

**Thursday, October 8, 2015 - Hosted by Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Sydney**

Minister Kelly O'Dwyer joined Australian Chamber guests in Sydney for a breakfast soon after her promotion in the Turnbull Government to Minister for Small Business and Assistant Treasurer. After her address discussing her priorities in the portfolio of Small Business and in working with Treasurer Morrison as Assistant Treasurer, Minister O'Dwyer sat down to a panel discussion and Q and A with John Osborn, Australian Chamber's Director of Economic and Industry Policy and moderator Sally Loane, Chief Executive Officer, Financial Services Council.

Hosted by Robert Regan, Sydney Managing Partner, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, other breakfast guests included the Hon Warwick Smith AM, Chairman, ANZ Banking Group for NSW and ACT, and the Hon Helen Coonan, Non-Executive Director, Crown Resorts Limited.



## Glenn Stevens, Governor, Reserve Bank of Australia

**Tuesday, October 20, 2015, - Doltone House, Sydney**

Each year the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has the opportunity to provide the Reserve Bank of Australia Governor a business briefing over lunch. This briefing has traditionally been with members of the Australian Chamber Board, on this occasion event invitations were extended to Chamber CEOs, key industry association members, and NSW Business Chamber Board Members. Glenn Stevens joined 30 guests for the exclusive briefing of business conditions and sentiment.



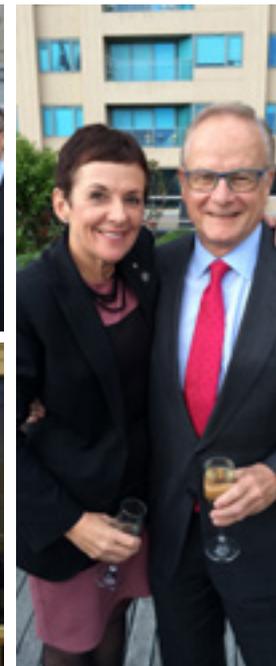
## The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Territories, Local Government and Major Projects

**Tuesday, October 27, 2015 – Hosted by Lendlease, Sydney**

Recently promoted Minister in the Turnbull government, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, joined Kate Carnell and Australian Chamber members and guests for a reception hosted in the Sydney offices of Lendlease. The guests enjoyed spectacular views over the developing Barangaroo precinct from the roof terrace prior to hearing the Minister's address on the important issues surrounding his portfolios.

On behalf of Lendlease, Michael Zorbas, Head of External Affairs introduced the Minister. Paul Fletcher discussed the portfolios of Territories, Local Government and Major Projects and the priorities for the Turnbull government in promoting growth before Kate Carnell conducted a Q and A with him.

Guests in attendance included Tony Shepherd AO, ASTRA Chairman and Jane Connolly, Consul General of Ireland in Sydney.



## Greg Medcraft, ASIC Chairman

**Friday, November 6, 2015 – Hosted by Minter Ellison, Sydney**

Mr Greg Medcraft, ASIC Chairman, was the keynote speaker at the Business Leaders Council luncheon hosted by MinterEllison in Sydney.

Introduced by MinterEllison Partner, Stuart Johnson, Mr Medcraft addressed the guests on the importance of ASIC's roles of regulator and law enforcer for Australian companies, financial markets, financial services organisations and professional advisers. He explained ASIC's challenges in dealing with complex financial products, structural change, digital disruption, globalisation and improving investor and financial consumer trust and confidence in markets.

The Hon Helen Coonan, Non-Executive Director, Crown Resorts Limited conducted a Q and A with Greg Medcraft and the Australian Chamber's Director of Economics and Industry Policy, John Osborn. The vote of thanks was moved by Terry Wetherall, Deputy President of the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Guests attending included Tony Harrington AM, Chief Executive, MinterEllison, the Hon Andrew Stoner, former National Party Leader & NSW Deputy Premier, the Hon Frank Sartor AO, former Labor NSW Minister and former Lord Mayor of Sydney, Billie Moore, New Zealand Consul-General in Sydney & Hugo Llorens, US Consul-General in Sydney.



# AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN THE MEDIA

## Get your FTA skates on: business

SID MAHER  
NATIONAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

Business groups are calling for a quick end to negotiations between the government and Labor on the China trade deal after the opposition released three key demands for its support to pass it.

Bill Shorten and Labor trade spokeswoman Penny Wong called for amendments to codify legislation labour market testing, lift base pay rates for 457 visa holders and a tighter skills test linking

effect by the end of the year to allow benefits to flow to exporters worth about \$600 million.

He said safeguards in Labor's key proposals were already clear government policy.

Mr Shorten urged Malcolm Turnbull and Mr Robb to "come to the table" on Labor's proposals.

Labor's amendments to the Migration Act mandate that investment facilitation agreements, which apply to projects worth more than \$150m, require labour from the Pacific and Australians to

pay rates could be damaging to rural areas.

Business Council of Australia chief executive Jennifer Westcott said: "Our primary objective is that the CFAFTA should be passed and our position remains that it should be passed without unnecessary amendments to the Migration Act."

Australian Industry Group chief executive Innes Willox said Labor's amendments needed to be considered carefully to ensure they did not add unnecessary layers of complexity to the 457

## NOTHING RULED OUT FOR NATIONAL SUMMIT TO BREAK POLITICAL DEADLOCK 'We must all give ground to achieve reform'

## Companies can direct award staff to take holidays

# Business in victory over forced leave

Ewin Hannan  
Workplace editor

Employers will get new rights to direct their workers to take leave or offer to put up to two weeks of leave a year, a major victory for companies in a ruling, which may eventually be criticised by the union but which said low-paid workers forced to cash out leave and have adequate holidays.

Employers said the decision would allow companies to reduce their leave on their balance sheets. By requiring workers to cash out leave, companies would save money, given the social liability of untaken leave as pay rises flow to workers.

employees to take leave when workers have accrued at least seven weeks' leave.

Under the proposed clause, the workers must be given eight weeks' notice, retain a leave balance of six weeks and not be required to take leave of less than a week. Before the direction can be made, the employer must meet with the worker to try to reach an

Continued p8  
▶ News Shorter  
▶ Letters Ref

## Make focus on skills training our business

JOE KELLY

An overhaul of the training and education sector, a federal takeover of TAFE and changes to the work-for-the-dole scheme have been identified as key priorities for the Turnbull government.

Business, unions and community groups gathering in Canberra yesterday agreed there was a need to overhaul the training sector to eliminate waste and better align education with the skills needs of the Australian economy.

Developing a closer and more productive relationship between business and universities was deemed critical to improving innovation outcomes.

Specific changes canvassed included a proposal to boost work-

women and older Australians.

"We talked about a program that we would work up together to make it easier for small to medium businesses to be able to employ people who have been unemployed for a period of time," she said.

"We'll now do some solid work to bring that together ... We think we can do that inside current budget approaches."

A federal takeover of TAFE was proposed, Ms Carnell warning that too many Australians were being trained-up in areas that did not serve business and industry needs. "We were talking about skills training, the fact that there is a huge gap between, say, TAFE and vocational training and what businesses need," she said. "We

maintaining in education, to find and maintain employment," he said.

Ms Carnell also talked up the need to improve co-operation between local businesses and schools, including better career advice for students and more visits to schools by local business figures.

She warned that the education and training sector was not flexible enough. "It was identified and accepted by everybody that there was currently significant waste in the training sector," she said.

"There is a need for schools to be working closely with businesses at a local level.

"Schools tend to push back on business coming into their schools."

The prospect of university fund-

## Business pushes for growth

CEOs unite: need to lift focus at summit beyond short-term corporate interests

## Business to PM: Don't ruin confidence

Phillip Coorey  
Chief political correspondent

The business community has urged the Abbott government to spread the burden of repair in the budget next month to avoid further hits to confidence.

As Prime Minister Tony Abbott sought to reassure business that the budget would offset all new spending and the deficit would start to shrink, Australian Chamber of Commerce and industry president Peter Hood said the budget needed to be fair but also must shore up sagging business confidence.

"I don't think there is any doubt that we need a budget that is demonstrably fair and that encourages all sectors of the Australian economy to make equitable sacrifices that allow the budget to be at least balanced," Mr Hood said.

"We must be careful that in that process, business regains confidence. It is business and private-sector growth that create the prosperity and jobs we need, and vibrant business means a vibrant Australia."

Mr Hood's remarks came as he introduced Mr Abbott, who used a speech at an ACCI lunch to outline the parameters of his budget. He said despite the falling iron ore price pricing \$30 billion

sure families they would be spared in this year's budget. Households bore the brunt of last year's budget while business was spared. Down in the polls as a result, the government has already flagged a focus on business this year with plans for a so-called Google tax and a bank deposits tax.

But Mr Abbott also used the speech to emphasise plans to forge ahead with a tax cut of at least 15 per cent for all small businesses, regardless of how they were structured. The government is also looking at additional measures, such as accelerated depreciation.

As a consequence, Mr Abbott confirmed once more the government had dumped its paid parental leave scheme and the associated policy of cutting company tax for all businesses by 15 per cent to 28.5 per cent. The government also scrapped the plan to add back a 15 per cent levy for all businesses with taxable income over \$5 million to help pay for the PPL scheme. The savings from the dumped scheme will be used to fund the small business tax cuts, whereas the childcare package, the other key feature of the budget, will be funded from the existing childcare budget plus whatever savings can be made by

**Key points**  
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry says the budget needs to be fair.  
It must also shore up sagging business confidence, says the ACCI.

## Big business steps up to accentuate the positive

EXCLUSIVE  
GREG SHERIDAN  
FOREIGN EDITOR

The two big business campaigns supporting the free-trade agreement are well under way, with newspaper advertising leading both the Business Council of Australia's campaign and a similar campaign led by the Minerals Council.

The campaigns together likely cost at least \$1 million could go higher, sources say.

The BCA campaign began with a video statement by chairwoman Catherine Livingstone and full-page advertisements in several tabloid newspapers' continues today with advertisements in Australian and Financial Review.

The ads emphasise

benefits and says: "Let's support the free-trade export agreement with China and help secure economic growth for this and Australia."

The access business see

Mark Kenny  
Lisa Cox

Business, welfare, and union leaders plan to press new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Treasurer Scott Morrison to commit to a tangible reform in the near term to unshackle the Asian century at a meeting in Australia for summit in Canberra at a meeting dubbed a mini-bodies say years of political gridlock have made the reform task urgent, and they now want an emphasis on "actual doable" policies, rather than more talk.

The push comes amid fresh hopes change might again be possible out of Canberra, after Reform Summit - jointly sponsored by Fairfax Media and News Corporation - were summarised by Mr Turnbull to the cabinet room to discuss ideas.

High on their list is tax reform, around which there is an emerging national consensus including for a lower company tax rate, addressing bracket creep, and a tightening of that allow wealthier taxpayers to divert significant income into concessional tax superannuation. Other changes such as GST and serious reform, however, remain

ment had negative

Competition Plea to keep ACCC role

## Small business defends seat at table

Nassim Khadem

The Harper review recommendation to axe the ACCC role of small business commissioner and deputy chairman Dr Michael Schaper is a bad move, says the nation's biggest small business lobby.

In its final submission to the competition policy review, the Aus-

change Section 46 of competition laws, which deals with the misuse of market power.

The proposed "effects test" in Harper's report would prohibit a business with substantial market power from engaging in conduct that has the purpose, effect or likely effect of lessening competi-

tion", saying the maximum penalties should be the same as those applying to other breaches of the competition law.

It also agrees communitarianism - the

ECONOMICS

## Sort it out this time, business tells party

ANNABEL HEPWORTH  
NATIONAL BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

Business is urging the government to go to the next election with a "real plan" for economic reform, warning that political instability undermines business confidence.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry boss Kate Carnell said it was "essential that the Liberal Party sort it out this time" as business "wants this to be it, no more of this leadership to-ing and fro-ing ... Business needs confidence that the government has a long-term plan and that they can sell it to the community, to the

## PM urged to legislate to cut penalty rates

Ewin Hannan  
Workplace editor

called on the Abbott government to legislate to cut penalty rates for employers who fail to pay superannuation.

Commission is unable to deal with this issue," she said.

"I think if the Fair Work Commission doesn't do that, we would be suggesting to government that they need to look at legislation because it means that the Fair Work Commission is unable to deal with this issue," she said.

Unions have already moved to escalate their campaign against the proposed penalty rate cuts, organising a national doorknock in marginal seats to try and increase voter opposition to the suggested changes.

Campaign material highlighting negatively the Productivity Commission's findings have been produced, describing the recommendations as a "wish list for bad employers". Unions

## Business pushes PM for reforms

costs, currently at around \$23.5 billion, set to outstrip the total outlay on the age pension by 2018-19. The age pension cost the budget \$4.2 billion in 2015-16. Treasury forecasts suggest both will exceed \$50 billion by this decade end.

At least some of this could be clawed back by cutting the concessional rates for high income earners, described by the Greens leader Richard Di Natale on Wednesday as a "tax haven for the wealthy".

Chief executive of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kate Carnell said "doable" policies on issues such as workforce participation. "If we can't get more women, young and older people into the workforce, we can't get productivity up," she said.

In echoes of Bob Hawke's new consensus of the early 1980s, the ACTU has declared it is "ready to roll up its sleeves" to "work with the government, business and community groups to kick-start urgent action to grow the economy. But unions say the reform task cannot be seen as simply cutting wages and other costs for employers and reducing taxes.

"We want to engage on the road of reform - not the low road of reducing wages, stripping conditions or cost shifting on to working families," said ACTU secretary Dave Oliver. "Cutting your way to experience of austerity European has shown that this is a long term, sustainable economic growth."



## Minimum wage rise 'will cost jobs'

JOE KELLY

Business is sounding the alarm on a \$16 per week minimum wage increase, warning it will push up costs, force shop closures and prevent jobseekers from obtaining work.

The ACTU claims the increase is not enough and says the minimum wage is running at only 43

Ross will lift the new national minimum wage to \$656.90 per week (\$17.29 per hour), up from the current rate of \$640.90 per week (\$16.87 per hour).

The 2.5 per cent lift applies to about 1.86 million award covered workers with Justice Ross saying the increase was "modest" when compared with last year's wage increase of 3 per cent.

"This is concerning for the more than 750,000 Australians, including nearly 300,000 young people, who are looking for work," she said.

"Last month's federal budget forecast unemployment to reach 6.5 per cent in the coming financial year, showing we need to do all we can to keep businesses

open and create jobs. The government had a negative impact on the economy. The government had a negative impact on the economy. The government had a negative impact on the economy.

AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER NATIONAL MEMBER NETWORK: BUSINESS SA CANBERRA BUSINESS CHAMBER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY QUEENSLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY WESTERN AUSTRALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NORTHERN TERRITORY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY QUEENSLAND NSW BUSINESS CHAMBER TASMANIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY VICTORIAN EMPLOYERS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY ACCORD - HYGIENE, COSMETIC AND SPECIALTY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY AGED AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AIR CONDITIONING & MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF NSW AUSTRALIAN SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION AND RADIO ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN BEVERAGES COUNCIL LIMITED AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN DENTAL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF EMPLOYERS & INDUSTRIES AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF TRAVEL AGENTS AUSTRALIAN FOOD & GROCERY COUNCIL AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES OPERATIONS GROUP AUSTRALIAN MADE CAMPAIGN LIMITED AUSTRALIAN MINES & METALS ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN PAINT MANUFACTURERS' FEDERATION AUSTRALIAN RECORDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN RETAILERS' ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN SELF MEDICATION INDUSTRY AUSTRALIAN STEEL INSTITUTE AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION BUS INDUSTRY CONFEDERATION COMMERCIAL RADIO AUSTRALIA CONSULT AUSTRALIA CRUISE LINES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION CUSTOMER OWNED BANKING ASSOCIATION DIRECT SELLING ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA EXHIBITION & EVENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA FITNESS AUSTRALIA HOUSING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION LARGE FORMAT RETAIL ASSOCIATION LIVE PERFORMANCE AUSTRALIA MASTER BUILDERS AUSTRALIA MASTER PLUMBERS' & MECHANICAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES NATIONAL ELECTRICAL & COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL FIRE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NATIONAL RETAIL ASSOCIATION NATIONAL ROADS AND MOTORISTS' ASSOCIATION NEW SOUTH WALES TAXI COUNCIL OIL INDUSTRY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION PHARMACY GUILD OF AUSTRALIA PHONOGRAPHIC PERFORMANCE COMPANY OF AUSTRALIA PACIA PRINTING INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA RESTAURANT & CATERING AUSTRALIA SCREEN PRODUCERS AUSTRALIA VICTORIAN AUTOMOBILE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE