

Performance Highlights

During 2010-11 the SBDC, through its Small Business Services team, has:

- provided an overall total of 37,495 small business clients with guidance, referral and business advisory services with KPI survey results indicating overall client satisfaction levels at 88%. The total number of clients is slightly lower than last year, due to a change in the reporting process and the increased use of the SBDC website by clients,
- assisted 14,189 clients through the SBDC Information Centre including 12,147 clients by phone, letter or fax,
- conducted 1,377 individual appointments with small business operators,
- provided online access to 5,072 clients to generate their own business licence reports on the website, and generated reports for a further 2,166 clients who requested a report,
- provided 2,143 clients with specialist commercial tenancy advice and a further 92 with assistance in making applications to the State Administrative Tribunal (the current dispute resolution agency for retail tenancy matters),
- delivered 11 BiZFiT Local Business Forums, conducted 114 BiZFiT Pulse checks, 13 BiZFiT Extend workshops, provided 88 mentoring sessions and awarded 36 scholarships. In total, 1,028 business owners and operators participated in the BiZFiT business resilience program during the year, 31 BiZFiT events were held in the regional areas of Albany, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Lancelin, Narrogin, Northam, Margaret River and Merredin, and the metropolitan areas of Balcatta, Bentley, Gosnells, Joondalup, Maylands, South Perth and West Perth.
- increased membership of the five specialist online network groups; Young Business Network, Home Based Business Network, Women in Business Network, Business Migrant Network, and Small Business Exporters Network, from 11,005 in 2009-10 to 12,563 members,
- encouraged and facilitated greater cooperation and collaboration between State and Commonwealth government agencies in their delivery of services to small business through BiZLinks seminars. Three seminars were held during the year for 226 participants.
- conducted 192 small business workshops for a total of 2,198 potential and existing small business operators. This represents a 21 per cent increase on last year, due largely to the free, two-hour “BizBasics” workshop which attracted 1,650 participants to 79 workshops.
- increased activities and services on Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands through the Indian Ocean Territories Service Delivery Agreement, providing 96 one-on-one appointments and specialist workshops for 322 business owners and operators,
- worked collaboratively with other government agencies and departments on projects and programs concerning small business, including:
 - the design and development of the new Tourism BOOST program for tourism operators wanting to improve their understanding of the industry and increase their market reach,

- administering the dry seasons assistance scheme for small businesses in affected areas of the State. The \$500,000 funding was distributed via a voucher system, to 335 eligible businesses,
- collaborating with the Department of Fisheries' rock lobster industry program by providing presentations to 270 members of the rock lobster industry to assist them in considering their alternatives following the introduction of restrictions and reductions in quotas.

Through its Business Migration Centre, the SBDC has;

- responded to 6,236 enquiries from potential business migrants and migration agents,
- participated in international migration expos and events, seminars and appointments in the State's prime markets of China, Malaysia, Singapore and South Africa. In total, over 4,400 participants attended these combined events.
- approved 267 State sponsorships for new business migrants and registration of a further 18 new business migrants for unsponsored visas to settle and go into business in Western Australia,
- approved 108 State sponsorships for business migrants and registration of a further 16 business migrants on temporary residency visas converting to permanent residency visas.

A key outcome achieved for the Western Australian economy during the 2010-11 financial year is that 155 business migrants finalised their investments in Western Australia, resulting in a total of \$293.4 million being injected into the State for business establishment, Treasury bond investment, personal expenditure and settlement costs.

Through its Policy and Advocacy team, the SBDC has;

- worked with the Parliamentary Counsel's office to draft amendments to the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983* and the *Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act 1985* to establish a Small Business Commissioner in Western Australia,
- provided submissions to reviews including the:
 - Review of the Franchising Bill 2010 (WA),
 - Department of Commerce's Position Paper on the creation of a lease register for retail tenancy leases,
 - Federal Government's Options Paper on the Resolution of small business (business-to-business) disputes,
 - Amendola Review into the State Industrial Relations System,
 - Australian Business Number and Business Names Registration Project,
- reviewed 72 Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIA) and worked with 21 agencies to provide guidance in the completion of RIA requirements to ensure that proposed regulations do not result in adverse or unintended consequences for business,
- investigated 45 advocacy issues raised by small business operators, analysing issues in detail and liaising with relevant government agencies to identify potential policy or regulatory solutions that go beyond addressing the specific problem of a single small business,
- provided advice to the Western Australian Government and the Parliament throughout the

development of the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Amendment Bill 2011, including detailed comments and policy advice on the potential effects of a proposed retail shop lease register on small businesses and assisting the Department of Commerce to develop options for improving access to lease information in the retail tenancy market in Western Australia,

- worked with the Department of Commerce to ensure that as the Australian Business Name registration project progressed, the Federal Government took into consideration the needs of Western Australian small businesses in relation to the cross-border protection of existing business names, legal and governance issues, transitional arrangements, and distribution channels.

Through the Aboriginal Business Unit, the SBDC has:

- attracted 44 new business clients, conducted 58 client follow-up contracts, made 57 company contacts, and collaborated on six projects,
- sponsored Many Rivers Microfinance (MRM) under the Wiluna Regional Partnership Agreement,
- developed and hosted a Costing and Pricing workshop for Wajarri/Yamatji Geraldton,
- worked with the Gnaarla Karla Booja to progress the strategies of the Employment and Economic Development Agreement (GKBEEDA),
- funded a total of 21 businesses through the Aboriginal Business Initiatives Fund (ABIF) to undertake a range of activities including the development of business plans, feasibility studies and marketing plans and to access professional advice. In total the ABIF provided \$192,656,

- supported 23 Aboriginal tourism businesses through business asset acquisitions and marketing initiatives with funding from the Tourism WA funded Capacity Building Program,
- participated in the “Making a Difference: Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2011-2015”. This strategy will play a key role in providing opportunities for the continued development of Aboriginal tourism in Western Australia.



In the 2010 Western Australian Regional Small Business Awards, the winner of the Best Aboriginal Business was Portacomm SX5 Building Systems, Karratha. Directors Kenzie Smith and Ralph Keller accepted their award from the category sponsors Woodside Energy Ltd.

Through the 25 Small Business Centres situated throughout the State, the SBDC:

- continued to support new and existing small business operators through advisory services, client appointments, workshops, site visits and specialist business programs. During 2010-11, the Small Business Centre Network undertook 42,476 client sessions, which resulted in 1,375 new business start ups,
- responded to the needs of small business in the Gascoyne, Murchison and Pilbara regions following the floods of January 2011. The SBDC, partnered with the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of WA (FESA) and the Small Business Centre, Gascoyne, to deliver small business grants to eligible businesses. This resulted in 38 businesses successfully applying for assistance,
- supported the south west region of Manjimup following the announcement of the closure of Gunns Limited, a major employer in the region. As part of the coordinated State Government response to this issue, the SBDC provided funding for market research into the needs of local businesses, and assisted in the production of support materials.

Through the Corporate Affairs and Communications team, the SBDC:

- doubled its membership numbers on the SBDC Facebook page,
- allocated sponsorship funding to the value of \$162,000,
- featured 56 SBDC clients in local, national and international media stories,
- planned and held the 2010 Western Australian Regional Small Business Awards.

Through the Corporate Resources function, the SBDC:

- completed the transition to the Department of Treasury and Finance Shared Services Centre,
- relocated the SBDC to new premises at 140 William Street, Perth,
- provided financial, human resource and online services for the Corporation and its staff,
- provided small business information online, via the SBDC's websites, to over 140,000 visitors who spent more than four minutes at the websites.