



# WINS FOR BUSINESS

**Over 2015, the NSW Business Chamber's sustained advocacy efforts achieved a number of significant policy changes that will both positively impact on member's bottom line and help grow our state's economy.**

Our successful 'Unfinished Business' state election campaign set the agenda for how NSW can better attract investment, develop jobs and encourage economic growth to support our growing population. That campaign focussed on 5 key priorities for the next Government of NSW:

1. Fund and deliver more infrastructure across NSW through public asset swaps
2. Revitalise and reform local government
3. Deliver senior schooling more effectively to improve outcomes for young people
4. Improve NSW's energy security and address pricing challenges
5. Put NSW on the front foot by creating a more competitive tax system

**This advocacy has seen:**

- The long term leasing of the state's electricity network (poles and wires) releasing \$20 billion for new public infrastructure
- Commitment from the NSW Government to remove taxes on business transactions in 2016 saving business \$400 million p.a.
- The announcement that the NSW Government would seek to reduce the number of councils in NSW from 152 to 112

At a federal level, the Chamber's 2013 federal election campaign 'Small Business: Too Big to Ignore' continued to resonate. Our sustained advocacy on the priorities identified in that campaign and on the need for policy makers to recognise the challenges facing small business cut through dramatically in the 2015-16 Federal Budget. The Budget saw more than \$5.5 billion in initiatives to support small business, including a 1.5% cut in the company tax rate for businesses with annual turnover under \$2 million and a new measure allowing small businesses to claim immediate tax deductions on new assets valued up to \$20,000 until 30 June 2017.

**NSW Business Chamber engages with political decision makers at the federal, state and local level to deliver real results for our members and the broader business community.**

**Drawing on the insights and expertise of our members through policy committees, Regional President's forums and the Chamber's State Council, we identify the key issues impacting business and find practical policy solutions to ensure businesses across NSW have the opportunity to innovate and grow.**

 Issue	 Small Business	 Tax Reform	 Workplace Relations	 Employment	 Local Government
 <b>NSWBC called on the Government to...</b>	<p>Support small business by increasing the instant asset write-off threshold.</p>	<p>Remove unfair taxes on business transactions. Reduce tax and compliance costs for entrepreneurs and start-ups.</p>	<p>Increase flexibility of annual leave provisions in modern awards system.</p>	<p>Reverse requirements for job seekers to apply for 40 jobs a month.</p>	<p>Improve the strategic capacity and capability of local government to support business through council mergers.</p>
 <b>Outcome</b>	<p>As part of the 2015-16 Budget, the Federal Government announced that for the next two years, small businesses will be able to immediately deduct the cost of individual assets under \$20,000. This will allow business owners to spend much needed capital on their businesses, driving innovation and injecting funds into the economy.</p> <p><b>Saving \$1.8 billion for small business.</b></p>	<p>The NSW Government has committed to remove taxes on a number of business transactions by 2016, <b>saving business \$400 million per year.</b></p> <p>The Federal Government has now reinstated the ability for entrepreneurs to offer equity-based remuneration to employees without penalty – putting Australian businesses, especially start-ups, on an equal footing with their international competitors.</p>	<p>The Full Bench of the Fair Work Commission granted numerous claims filed by NSW Business Chamber and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry which will provide for <b>greater flexibility for employers and employees in managing annual leave.</b></p>	<p>The Federal Government backed down on the measure which would have created unnecessary paperwork on businesses bombarded by job applications.</p> <p><b>Saving business \$700 million in processing costs each year.</b></p>	<p>On 8 January 2016 the NSW Government announced 35 merger proposals that would see <b>the number of councils across NSW reduce from 152 to 112.</b></p> <p>In Sydney, the proposed mergers will reduce the number of councils from 43 to 25 while 109 regional councils will be reduced to 87.</p>

 Issue	 Superannuation	 Infrastructure	 Education	 Tourism	 Reducing tax
 <b>NSWBC called on the Government to...</b>	<p>Reduce red tape by allowing more small businesses to access the Small Business Superannuation Clearing House.</p>	<p>Fund and deliver more infrastructure across NSW through public asset swaps.</p>	<p>Provide additional assistance for students and disengaged young people to learn in the workplace and find education, training and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Support tourism and business opportunities in Western Sydney by investing in cultural assets.</p>	<p>Reducing the tax burden on small business.</p>
 <b>Outcome</b>	<p>Businesses with an annual turnover below \$2 million can now access the Superannuation Clearing House. The Clearing House is a free service that allows employers to pay employee superannuation contributions in one transaction to one location. The Clearing House had previously only been accessible to businesses with less than 20 employees.</p> <p><b>A reduction of \$20 million in equivalent red tape for employers.</b></p>	<p>The NSW Government has committed to leasing 49% of the state's electricity network which will <b>release a projected \$20 billion in funds to be invested in new infrastructure projects,</b> with \$6 billion reserved for projects in regional NSW. Projects committed to include the Second Sydney Harbour Crossing, the Darling Harbour Transformation, and Northconnex.</p>	<p>Each year in NSW, approximately 30,000 employers provide work placements for 60,000 school students as part of the Structured Workplace Learning program. The NSW Government has <b>committed \$27 million</b> to keep the program running and help ensure that students who enrol in a vocational education and training course as part of their HSC get an opportunity to apply their skills in the workplace. \$8 million has now been committed to provide young people in regional areas viable pathways into education, training and employment.</p>	<p>The NSW Government has committed to <b>relocating the Powerhouse Museum from Ultimo to Parramatta.</b></p> <p>This is the first time that a tier one cultural institution will be located in Western Sydney.</p>	<p>In the 2013 Budget, the NSW Government announced that the payroll tax threshold would rise from \$689,000 to \$750,000, saving \$33 million for business in 2014-15. In the 2014-15 Budget, the Federal Government announced it would deliver a 1.5 percentage point tax cut for small companies and a 5 per cent tax discount on income from unincorporated small business activity.</p> <p><b>Saving an additional \$1.2 billion for small business from 2015-17.</b></p>

# Advocacy Agenda 2016

## Federal

With a federal election due to be held before the end of the year, advocacy opportunities and resources will be focussed on impacting and influencing the discussion and debate at the federal level. The campaign will likely be centred on the need to boost Australia's competitiveness given its declining standing in global ratings.

## NSW

At a state level advocacy will be centred on progressing 'Unfinished Business' priorities and tracking the implementation of committed policy change. Key agenda items under committee portfolios will include:

Business Environment and Economics	Infrastructure	Skills	Workplace Health and Safety	Workplace Relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for a more competitive tax system by calling on the NSW Government to consider reducing the role of conveyancing stamp duties and other inefficient state-based taxes in the current tax mix</li> <li>Ensure that taxpayers get value for money by calling on the Government to take a vigilant approach to expense management, including in areas such as health spending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the NSW Government's current amalgamation plan to continue advocating for the structural and functional reform of local government</li> <li>Call on the NSW Government to maintain its Restart NSW commitments to invest in new public infrastructure projects in both metropolitan and regional NSW</li> <li>Ensure that energy security, particularly in relation to the gas needs of NSW industry, remains a high priority for the NSW Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reform secondary schooling to better meet the needs of young people who do not follow a university pathway</li> <li>Ensure that the NSW Smart &amp; Skilled reforms are industry led, maintain quality of training provision, gradually increase contestability of funding, and enhance student and employer choice</li> <li>Leverage NSW's current record investment in public infrastructure to better support young people enter the workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the roll out and impact of the new premium system for medium and large employers</li> <li>Hold the Government to account by demanding regular and transparent data updates in key areas impacting on members, including the actuarial performance of the compensation scheme and on prosecution and compliance data</li> <li>Engage with the new entities of Insurance &amp; Care NSW (icare), SafeWork NSW and the State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the push for the reduction of excessive weekend and public holiday penalty rates particularly in the retail, restaurant and hospitality sectors. Our claims are currently before the Fair Work Commission.</li> <li>Continue to work through the Government and the Fair Work Commission for more flexible workplace relations regulation that supports modern Australian business</li> <li>As part of the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review process, work with the Australian Chamber to argue for restraint in any wage increase so as to be sustainable in the current and projected economic and business outlook</li> </ul>

**Our Thinking Business**  
research initiative identifies  
practical solutions to help  
solve real business problems.

Reports delivered in 2014-15  
covered reforming post year  
10 education and training,  
and the Western Sydney  
airport.

## Research



To inform members  
and give them the  
chance to put their  
views forward personally,  
the Chamber holds regular  
forums with key political  
and business decision  
makers.



## Forums

## Direct engagement



The Chamber regularly  
meets with Ministers,  
Members of Parliament  
and heads of Government  
departments to put  
forward the concerns  
of members and the  
business community  
at large.



## Submissions

In 2014-15 the NSW  
Business Chamber  
provided more than 50  
submissions to Government  
inquiries to highlight the  
concerns of our 19,000 members.



## Media

Appearing regularly  
on TV, radio and in  
newspapers the  
Chamber receives  
more than 150  
media mentions  
a month.

## Listening to our members



More than 200  
members formally  
participate in setting the  
policy and advocacy agenda  
of the Chamber through our  
advisory councils and committees.  
Last year more than 4,000 businesses  
responded to our surveys on issues  
such as red tape, business conditions  
and workers compensation.

# A big voice for business

