



Media Release

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Small Business Commissioner encourages less complexity for employing and paying staff

The Queensland Small Business Commissioner, Maree Adshead is concerned about the compliance burden faced by small business owners and is encouraging governments to work together with small business representatives, unions and other stakeholders to simplify the rules for employing and paying staff.

“I hear regularly from small business owners that wage awards can be overwhelming to navigate. The vast majority are hardworking people who value their staff and want to do the right thing, however because of the complexities involved, they are afraid of making mistakes, of getting it wrong and being penalised,” Ms Adshead said.

“Unforeseen things happen all the time when running a small business, which is why flexibility is important when it comes to managing staff. The rules have many moving parts and variables to try and stay on top of. I can’t be sure I always get it right, all of the time,” said the owner of an independent grocer in regional Queensland.

According to a [recent report](#) published by NAB about supporting small business recovery, a small business employer west of Brisbane had to pay “one school-aged worker at five different rates throughout her 14-hour working week”.

“Simplifying the rules for small business employers will increase compliance and is therefore an important part of the solution,” Ms Adshead said.

“Over the years, businesses of all sizes and sectors of the economy have had to adapt to disruptive forces to survive, such as what we are seeing right now with the COVID-19 pandemic. The workforce landscape is changing and will continue to do so. It is a good opportunity to review how the rules are working for everyone.

“With the Australian Government’s announcement about extending the JobKeeper Payment scheme for a further six months I would like to encourage that they work with employer and employee stakeholders to address these challenges, simplify the complexity to make it easier for businesses to employ and grow,” Ms Adshead said.

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