

Statement of Expectations
Queensland Small Business Commissioner

Small Businesses play a pivotal role in the State, supporting local jobs and local communities.

Establishing a permanent Queensland Small Business Commissioner (the Commissioner) was a key Government election commitment and an important initiative under the *Big Plans for Small Business Strategy 2021-23*.

As the Commissioner, you are responsible for providing contemporary, results-driven leadership of the Office of the Small Business Commissioner (the Office). In leading the office, I expect you to demonstrate the leadership competencies as outlined in the Public Service Commission's Leadership Competencies for Queensland document.

Enhancing the Operating Environment for Small Business

I expect you to lead the Office in meeting the first of the objectives outlined in the *Small Business Commissioner Act 2022* (SBC Act), which is to enhance the operating environment for small businesses in Queensland.

To achieve this first objective, I expect you to lead the Office in delivering the following functions outlined in the SBC Act:

- providing a central point of contact in relation to matters affecting small businesses;
- providing information and advisory services to the public about matters relating to small businesses;
- advocating on behalf of small businesses to the State, the Commonwealth, another State or a local government; or any other entity involved in administering a matter relevant to small businesses;
- working collaboratively with the equivalent of the commissioner in other States or the Commonwealth to enhance conditions for small businesses; and
- carrying out other activities to further the objects of this Act, as directed by the Minister.

I expect you to work to enhance the operating environment for small businesses in Queensland by:

- participating as an ex-officio member of the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council (QSBAC);
- engaging with and strengthening relationships with small business stakeholder groups and including regional representatives and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, Australian Industry Group and Council of Small Business of Australia;
- engaging with small businesses to identify priorities and challenges and report on emerging issues and trends to help inform government policy and support responsive government service;
- supporting small businesses impacted by natural disaster events, including by consolidating small business recovery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- raising awareness of the Small Business Commissioner's services and promoting and recommending suitable Queensland and other Government support programs;
- advocating for small business on the national level by representing Queensland on the National Small Business Commissioners' Group, providing an interface between

Queensland and Australian Government entities and providing arms-length input to the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman enquiries;

- working with the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction, the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (the Department) and the QSBAC to identify opportunities and options for improvements to the small business regulatory environment;
- providing an interface between small business, the Department, government agencies and the Procurement Industry Advisory Group and the North Queensland Small Business Recovery Advisory Council;
- delivering the Small Business Friendly Council Program; and
- undertaking any lawful activity that can reasonably be expected to enhance the operating environment for small business.

Reducing the Time and Costs Associated with Resolving Disputes Involving Small Business

I expect you to lead the Office in meeting the second objective outlined in the SBC Act, which is to reduce the time and cost associated with resolving disputes involving small business.

To achieve this second objective, I expect you to lead the Office in delivering the following functions outlined in the SBC Act:

- assisting parties in reaching an informal resolution for small business disputes, including by facilitating the exchange of information between the parties;
- providing alternative dispute resolution services and administer a mediation process for small business disputes; and
- performing functions conferred on the commissioner under another Act.

In delivering on this second objective, I expect you to competently administer the mediation process for retail tenancy disputes in Part 8 of the *Retail Shop Leases Act 1994* (RSL Act). I further expect that you will competently administer the process of appointing mediators in Part 9 of the RSL Act. I also expect that you will continue to competently administer the dispute resolution process for affected lease disputes in Part 3 of the *Retail Shop Leases and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020*.

I further expect the Commissioner to further deliver on its second objective, to reduce the time and costs associated with resolving disputes involving small business, by:

- identifying and implementing improvement measures to increase the efficiency and efficacy of the dispute resolution options provided by the Commissioner;
- promoting options available to small businesses for complaint and dispute resolution services, including providing resolution services and contacts across Government agencies; and
- referring small businesses to these alternative dispute resolution services; and
- undertaking any lawful activity that can reasonably be expected to reduce the time and costs associated with resolving disputes involving small business.

Relationship with Department and governance arrangements

I expect the Commissioner to maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Department to inform the policy objectives of the Small Business portfolio.

I expect the Commissioner to contribute relevant advice, best practices, issues and trends gathered from national-level conversations and engagement with small business to the Department to inform policy and legislation affecting small business.

I expect you to contribute and collaborate with the Department on the priority areas for my portfolio including workforce issues, engagement, procurement and regulatory reform. I also expect the Commissioner will work collaboratively with the Department to ensure that duplication of the Commissioner's and Department's functions is avoided.

I also request that you work closely my office and provide monthly updates on the progress of the Office of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner.

In accordance with the Act, I also expect you to prepare and give to me, within three months after the end of each financial year, an annual report on the functions performed, and the activities carried out, by you and your Office during the financial year.

As the Commissioner, I expect you to demonstrate an exceptional standard of management and leadership of the people and financial resources in conjunction with ensuring adherence to your obligations under any legislative and regulatory obligations.

This includes, but is not limited to, the relevant employment, financial accountability, workplace health and safety and integrity legislation and industrial relations instruments. This will include clear alignment to, and upholding of, the Queensland Public Service Code of Conduct (copy attached) and other policies established, implemented and managed by the Department (including the Department's media protocols) and other relevant agencies across the Queensland public sector.

As a public entity under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, I expect that you will act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights.