

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT RETAILERS ASSOCIATION

Media Release

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Budget keeps the delivery deliveries coming, but when and where's the reform?

NIRA supports most of the federal budget. The budget works well, confronts the issues, looks after big business and motivates innovators. It is a budget that looks after the "here and now" but creates a huge debt that will need to be addressed at sometime, and it also gives small businesses motivation to buy capital equipment.

The CEO of the National Independent Retailers Association (NIRA) Peter Strong has acknowledged that the 2009 budget is a well thought out response to the current crisis. "It is a worthy response in these difficult times when the problems are confronting and worrying". He added that "this seems to give something to everyone and the government has decided to have a long term deficit rather than an immediate social crisis and that is a strategic and considered decision. But as much as the retail sector will benefit, in particular from the infrastructure activity and the support for pensioners, it is still a sector that is once again ignored."

Mr Strong says the issue for small retailers is the lack of structural and legislative reform to allow them to deal with the traditional problems they have faced. "Any benefits from this budget will not have the full effect for retailers until problems of poor leasing arrangements and red tape such as superannuation and tax paperwork have been addressed. The new industrial relations arrangements are also a concern for the industry. If we want an efficient retail sector that can take advantage of the offerings from this budget then we need to get rid of unnecessary paperwork and worry." Mr Strong also welcomed the introduction of the small business help line but wants a better focus on early intervention, he added that "the Tax Office has real time information on businesses and regions that are taking a hit right now and we should use that information to target support to those that need it".

He suggested "perhaps in regions with the highest risk expert advisers could actually visit shops and cafes and offer support, ask questions and provide information - someone visiting a shop and showing that type of interest would be a social and business innovation supported by NIRA."

NIRA represents independent retailers who rely upon their businesses for maintenance of life style, their financial well being and the well being of their families. Small independent retailers add to the vibrancy and the character of communities across Australia and should be supported so that our retail

sector does not become too predictable and overly dominated by big business.

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