



The Retailers Association

Serving Members Australia Wide™

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Minister Caught Out in IR Report Cover Up

Small Business Minister Misleads Australians Over Government IR Report Data

Thursday, 14 January 2010

Scott Driscoll, National Executive Director of The Retailers Association has condemned the Federal Small Business Minister, Craig Emerson, for *fibbing* to cover up the real content of the Access Economics IR Report, his own government commissioned.

Mr Driscoll and Minister Emerson were involved in an on air debate over the new Rudd Government IR laws, on 4BC Radio in Brisbane on Wednesday afternoon (13/1/10), hosted by drive show compare, Michael Smith, when Minister Emerson *fibbed* to listeners, while at the same time, attempted to attack the personal credibility of Scott Driscoll, in order to deflect scrutiny of the new Rudd IR laws.

“On air, Minister Emerson repeatedly referenced the Access Economics IR Report his government commissioned as the holy grail of answers to everything IR. He even referred to the company the Rudd Government paid to create the report as “the alternate Treasury”, said Mr Driscoll.

“I put it to Minister Emerson during our on air debate that only 4 small business operators* were surveyed within the Access Economics IR Report, a fact he flatly and repeatedly denied and claimed was “rubbish”. This is a lie,” said Mr Driscoll.

“I frankly don’t care how much Minister Emerson wants to attack me personally for holding the Rudd Government to account in defence of small family business owners and their staff. But I do draw the line at him covering up the facts, when at the end of the day this should be about protecting jobs and looking after the little people,” said Mr Driscoll.

“Minister Emerson also falsely claimed on radio that I have not provided Julia Gillard’s department with the assistance and data they requested. This is also a lie, as I provided the requested data to her department within hours of it being requested and over 6 hours before Minister Emerson made the further false claims on air,” said Mr Driscoll.

“What’s worse is that after Julia Gillard’s department asked for information on how badly her IR laws will impact on job losses, senior officers from Minister Emerson’s own department also called my office seeking similar assistance. I again provided information to his department this time, over 6 hours prior to Minister Emerson falsely publically accusing me of holding back industry surveys and analysis,” said Mr Driscoll.

“Minister Emerson is very quick to slander, attack and *fib* about the messenger when the news reflects badly for the Rudd Government, even if in the next breath he’s lying through his own teeth,” said Mr Driscoll.

“When are Rudd Government Ministers going to be honest about these new IR laws and the fact they will cost thousands of jobs? When will they do something meaningful to reverse the militant aspects and help small business keep employing Australians,” said Mr Driscoll.

“Minister Emerson was more interested in personally attacking me on air for daring to speak the truth about job cost analysis we have already provided to the Government in an attempt to assist him, than to do anything about protecting the jobs of the thousands of Australians the new Rudd IR laws will wipe out,” said Mr Driscoll.

“On air yesterday, I offered to hire a local CWA hall and fill it with small business owners who would also confirm to Minister Emerson, Minister Gillard and Prime Minister Rudd that what I am telling them when it comes to the catastrophic levels of job losses and under-employment their IR laws are starting to cause, but Minister Emerson said he wasn’t interested in attending,” said Mr Driscoll.

****See page 9 of the Access Economics IR Report where in Section 3.1.1 and Chart 3.1 it clearly shows that only 30 businesses were included within the survey in total and that only 14% (= 4) were small businesses, by the Federal Governments own definition of a small business having 15 staff or less.***

Internet link to report:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/WorkplaceRelations/NewWorkplaceRelations/Documents/AE_Harmonisation.pdf

For further comment call Scott Driscoll on 0413 831 045.