

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

16 April 2018

### **Ombudsman calls for small businesses in trouble with ATO to “contact us”**

Small business owners are advised to urgently contact the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprises Ombudsman (ASBFEO) if they have experienced heavy handed tactics by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

“Minister for Revenue and Financial Services, Kelly O’Dwyer, has requested an inquiry into the allegations raised in the joint *Fairfax/Four Corners* investigation,” Ms Carnell said.

“Under the direction of Treasury, my office and the Inspector-General of Taxation, Ali Noroozi, will examine cases of unfair conduct by the ATO.

“Our timeframes on this inquiry are extremely tight, so its important small business owners tell us their story as a matter of urgency – within the next week or two.

“My office is interested in examples where the ATO has targeted small businesses unfairly and the business owner has been affected financially.

“According to the ATO’s latest annual report, there are 3.8 million small business taxpayers, including sole traders, in the tax system. The Inspector-General says in roughly 5% of cases, the ATO gets it wrong ... which on the face of it is way too many.

“We want to gain a better understanding of how the ATO is adversely interacting with small businesses so we can provide government with constructive and realistic advice.”

With complete anonymity assured, small business owners can explain their situation by emailing: [inquiries@asbfeo.gov.au](mailto:inquiries@asbfeo.gov.au)

If you have raised your concerns with ATO and the Inspector-General and your matter has not been resolved, ASBFEO may be able to assist via emailing: [info@asbfeo.gov.au](mailto:info@asbfeo.gov.au)

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