

## CCIQ - Solutions for Business Success

Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland (CCIQ) is committed to representing the interests of its members and the Queensland business community as a whole.

An important aspect of this role is the organisation's capacity to develop policy on industry related issues, which form the basis for addressing and positively influencing government policies, programs and legislation.

We have a direct role in identifying issues and their impact on industry, and researching, analysing and developing appropriate policy responses. It is essential that CCIQ members have the opportunity to discuss major issues and CCIQ's policy response.



## Wins for Business 2009

Actively representing Queensland's business community



Our success is success for all Queensland businesses.

Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland members are informed and connected business people. Whether you run a small business or form part of a large industry sector, call us today to take advantage of the opportunity to associate yourself with the CCIQ brand.

Visit [www.cciq.com.au](http://www.cciq.com.au) or phone 07 3842 2244 for more information.



Invigorating Business Representation

Invigorating Business Representation



Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland  
Industry House  
375 Wickham Terrace  
Brisbane Q 4000

t > 07 3842 2244  
f > 07 3832 3195  
e > [info@cciq.com.au](mailto:info@cciq.com.au)

August 2009

Call > 07 3842 2244

[www.cciq.com.au](http://www.cciq.com.au)

Call > 07 3842 2244

[www.cciq.com.au](http://www.cciq.com.au)

# Actively representing Queensland's business community

Action	Outcome
In the lead up to the 2009-10 State Budget, CCIQ urged the State Government to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; implement a budget surplus and debt retirement strategy to enable the State's AAA credit rating to be restored;</li> <li>&gt; reduce the cost of doing business in Queensland;</li> <li>&gt; reduce the compliance and paper work burden on business;</li> <li>&gt; improve the efficiency of the public service;</li> <li>&gt; ensure the State's infrastructure is maintained and improved; and</li> <li>&gt; improve skills education and training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; a 25% rebate on the eligible wages of apprentices and trainees in addition to these wages being exempt from payroll tax;</li> <li>&gt; estimated capital spending of \$18.2b;</li> <li>&gt; the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative worth \$19m;</li> <li>&gt; \$4m for the Industry Capability Network to work directly with businesses to help them identify and develop skills to increase their potential to win work on major projects;</li> <li>&gt; \$15m for the Climate Smart Business Service to assist SMEs to save energy and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions; and</li> </ul> <p>Despite an extensive media campaign mounted by the CCIQ including the largest petition in Queensland's history, the State Fuel Subsidy was not retained.</p>
CCIQ's submission to the 2009-10 Federal Budget lobbied for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; spending measures to be responsible and targeted towards economically valuable infrastructure;</li> <li>&gt; revenue measures to take cost pressures off doing business;</li> <li>&gt; business tax reductions available through the investment allowance extended beyond 30 June; and</li> <li>&gt; government to repay the deficit, and implement steps to reign in the size of government, red tape and waste.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; \$22b National Building Infrastructure including \$884m for further upgrades to the Ipswich Motorway, \$365m for Gold Coast Light Rail, \$488m for Bruce Highway duplication between Cooroy and Curra and \$20m for a feasibility study into Brisbane Inner City Rail;</li> <li>&gt; Small Business and General Business Tax Breaks were extended. The bonus tax deduction was increased to 50% for small businesses and 30% for all other businesses;</li> <li>&gt; the First Home Owners Boost extended until 31 December 2009;</li> <li>&gt; \$168m to assist small businesses and help them remain viable;</li> <li>&gt; cash flow relief to small businesses through reduced PAYG instalments;</li> <li>&gt; a new Small Business Support Line to assist small businesses affected by the GFC; and a</li> <li>&gt; \$500m to encourage the commercialisation of ideas and increase business R&amp;D.</li> </ul>
Lobbied for any Paid Parental Leave Scheme to be government funded with employers not subject to any additional on-cost for employees taking parental leave.	18 weeks of Government funded paid parental leave from 1 January 2011. Importantly, the Government has confirmed that employers will not be required to pay superannuation payments as originally proposed, which is a direct consequence of CCIQ advocacy. CCIQ submissions referred to on 11 separate occasions in Productivity Commission's final report.
CCIQ lobbied extensively to the ATO and Federal Government that overtime is not included for purposes of calculating employer superannuation liabilities.	ATO has decided not to proceed with plans that would have required employers to pay the compulsory 9% superannuation on overtime earnings. A back-door increase in superannuation charges has been avoided with hundreds of millions of dollars in extra superannuation charges.
Advocated for a delay in the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme with additional concessions and meaningful assistance for affected businesses.	The Federal Government has delayed the commencement of the CPRS until 2011, fixed the permit price at \$10 for the first year and provided an additional comprehensive assistance package for businesses. CCIQ will continue its representations.
CCIQ made extensive representations in various forums advocating for a more efficient and effective State public service structure.	The Premier implemented the most significant reforms in two decades with 23 departments streamlined into 13, and efficiency gains redirected to improving front-line services.
Lobbied the Reserve Bank of Australia to reduce official interest rates.	Over the period from January to July 2009 official interest rates were cut by 1.25% on top of rate reductions of 3.0% last year.
CCIQ opposed the Unions push to increase Federal wages by \$21 per week on the basis that it would decimate employment. If it was a choice between a job or a low minimum wage increase, the majority of employees affected would elect to keep their job.	The Australian Fair Pay Commission has agreed with this position and has frozen Federal wages for the next twelve months saving business \$1,092 per employee per year.
CCIQ lobbied to improve access to finance for small businesses. Representations included writing to the major banks and participating in a small business lending roundtable held by the Hon Dr Craig Emerson MP, Minister for Small Business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Major banks will seek to maintain the level of funds available to small business and continue to make loans to viable small businesses;</li> <li>&gt; Future reductions in the costs of funds will be passed on by the banks to the maximum extent possible; and</li> <li>&gt; Establish a small business complaints clearing house to deal with complaints about access to and the cost of bank finance.</li> </ul>

Action	Outcome
Lobbied for particular mechanisms that would assist in ameliorating possible negative impacts on employers which are directly attributable to the Federal award modernisation process.	Federal Government is showing signs of willingness to accommodate the specific requirements of certain industries following the revised direction to the AIRC to treat the restaurant and catering industry as a separate industry in response to employer concerns. A transition period of up to four years may also be implemented.
Urged the federal parliament to implement a new industrial relations system (Fair Work Act) that is an effective and workable method of regulation, and that employers' transition to the system is without undue cost and disruption.	The Senate made 231 amendments to the original Bill which will benefit employers including providing for a Small Business Fair Dismissal Code.
CCIQ has lobbied extensively for a single uniform system of Industrial Relations laws for Queensland businesses on the basis of clear benefits for business and the economy through the reduction of red tape and increased productivity.	Queensland Government has given its in-principle support for a seamless national industrial relations system for the private sector with 1 January 2010 as the potential start date.
Sought additional incentives and support to assist employers to commence, retain and re-engage Queensland apprentices and trainees during the economic downturn.	The State and Federal Governments have responded with a number of measures aimed at maintaining skills development and workforce productivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; the Federal Government's Securing Australian Apprenticeships initiative provides additional incentives of up to \$2,800 to employers who take on trade apprentices and trainees;</li> <li>&gt; the 2009 Federal Budget announced further reforms to streamline and extend the eligibility of existing employer training incentives; and</li> <li>&gt; in addition to the 25% rebate on Apprentice and Trainees the State Government has recommitted to the 10% training guarantee for all state government let construction or civil works projects.</li> </ul>
Argued for a legislative framework which facilitates more transparent, accountable and efficient local governments.	The Queensland Government has introduced a framework which will improve the transparency and accountability of local governments. The new arrangements will help to ensure that local councillors better understand their roles and responsibilities and encourage improved financial management. CCIQ will monitor progress in this area.
Opposed the Queensland Competition Authority's proposed 13.63% increase in electricity prices in 2009-10.	The QCA announced the Benchmark Retail Cost Index for 2009-10 would be 11.82% which is well below the 13.63% originally proposed. Will continue to fight for lower energy prices.
CCIQ has across the past twelve months sought real assistance from the Federal Government to help business deal with the impact of the Global Financial Crisis in particular minimising any costs to business and pulling forward infrastructure spending.	In addition to the \$10.4 billion stimulus announced last year the Australian Government announced a \$42 billion economic package including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; a \$900 one-off cash payment to low and middle income earners;</li> <li>&gt; a temporary business investment tax break for small and other businesses; and</li> <li>&gt; the Nation Building Infrastructure Program.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally the Prime Minister attended two CCIQ Business Summits to hear feedback from the Queensland business community.</p>
CCIQ has lobbied Infrastructure Australia for a Queensland infrastructure network capable of meeting the needs of our economy both now and into the future.	Infrastructure Australia has identified a number of priority projects in Queensland worth in excess of \$23b.
Advocated strongly for the Queensland Government to develop financial and non-financial measures to assist the State's small and medium-sized businesses to adapt to the impacts of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and climate change in general.	The Queensland Government has committed to introducing a number of initiatives, including the Climate Smart Business Service, which will assist small and medium-sized businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and adapt to the reality of a carbon-constrained economy.
Urged the State and Federal Governments to adopt a consistent approach to consumer laws across Australia to reduce the compliance burden on businesses.	The Council of Australian Governments has agreed to implement a single, nation-wide consumer law in Australia. This outcome will reduce the compliance burden on the business community by reducing the need to understand and comply with multiple state-based consumer laws.

## Meeting with the Decision Makers

CCIQ President & staff have recently met with the following in order to advance the interests of Queensland businesses:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| ✓ Prime Minister;                         | ✓ Minister for Industrial Relations;                                       | ✓ Minister for Climate Change & Sustainability;                       |
| ✓ Reserve Bank of Australia;              | ✓ Minister for Education & Training;                                       |   |
| ✓ The Premier's Office;                   | ✓ Minister for Natural Resources, Mines & Energy and Minister for Trade;   | ✓ Minister for Public Works & Information & Communication Technology; |
| ✓ The Treasurer;                          | ✓ Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries, Rural & Regional Queensland; | ✓ Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition.                         |
| ✓ Minister for Tourism & Fair Trading;    |  |   |
| ✓ Minister for Infrastructure & Planning; |  |   |

These positive meetings have provided good opportunities for CCIQ to raise important issues for the business community with key members of both the Government and the Opposition



## CCIQ Releases Blueprint for Economic Growth: Prior to the State Election

Prior to the State Election CCIQ released its Blueprint for Economic Growth which lobbied for the next state government to deliver:

- > responsible and accountable fiscal management with transparent pathways to return to a budget operating surplus and restore the State's AAA credit rating;
- > reduce both the costs of doing business and the associated compliance burdens;
- > ensure Queensland's tax regime is the most competitive of all states;
- > maintain and increase investment in key infrastructure assets with private sector involvement in the planning, development, construction and operation; and
- > invest in skills, education and training with particular focus on supporting SMEs to engage in this system, improve industry engagement and ensure the VET system is responsive to industry and individual needs.

Election commitments from the Queensland ALP following the Blueprint's release included:

- > returning the Budget to surplus and restoring the State's AAA credit rating when economic conditions allow;
- > simplifying regulation to remove possible barriers to business growth;
- > \$17 billion infrastructure program which includes \$7.7 billion on transport and road infrastructure;
- > expressed a willingness to involve the private sector in the state's infrastructure program;
- > \$124 million to help create almost 148,000 training places over the next 4 years; and
- > employers who hire an apprentice or trainee will receive a rebate of 125% of the wage of that employee on their payroll tax liability for another employee (worth \$15 million).

