



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **New campaign urges small businesses to boost employee literacy in the digital age**

The Reading Writing Hotline together with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman (ASBFEO) Kate Carnell, is today launching a joint campaign to support and encourage small business employees who are looking to improve their reading, writing, numeracy and digital literacy skills.

A pharmacist by trade, Ms Carnell said she once owned and operated a number of small businesses and knows first-hand the importance of workplace literacy for employers and their staff.

“Ensuring staff have the right tools to develop their literacy skills is vital, not only for the success of the business, but for the creation of a safe workplace where people can develop their careers, and build confidence in themselves through the satisfaction of a job well done,” Ms Carnell said.

“This of course isn’t limited to the more traditional reading and numeracy skills; digital literacy skills are also becoming increasingly important as small businesses innovate and adapt to the digital economy.

“So if you’re a small business owner out there who would like to support your staff in developing or improving their literacy skills, I encourage you to contact the Reading Writing Hotline; they have the expertise to help you take the next steps,” she said.

Reading Writing Hotline Manager Vanessa Iles said the Hotline is a free service to put employers in touch with workplace trainers who can develop a tailored plan to achieve their literacy goals, both for work and in their personal lives.

“Reaching out for help is often a difficult decision, but can be made easier with a supportive employer.

“Thanks to employers getting in touch with the Hotline, we’ve been able to help people who otherwise may have gone on struggling with poor literacy or numeracy, both at work and at home.

“Our joint campaign is all about improving lives, developing our workforce and ensuring the sustainability of small businesses,” Ms Iles said.

The Reading Writing Hotline, established in 1994, has helped more than 150 000 people.

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