

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION — REGIONAL SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

2624. Mr V.A. Catania to the Minister for Tourism; Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

I refer to the Small Business Development Corporation's (SBDC) decision to cancel the annual Regional Small Business Awards and I ask:

- (a) Can the Minister explain the benefits these awards, which have been celebrated for 15 consecutive years, brought to WA's small business community; and
- (b) Did the Minister or his colleague the Regional Development Minister issue a directive to the SBDC to scrap the awards as part of this government's budget repair measures?

Mr P. Papalia replied:

- (a) There are currently several locally based regional small business awards, which provide the opportunity to recognise local regional small businesses for their hard work and achievements. The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) currently supports 18 of these awards, which are organised by local organisations such as the Chambers of Commerce. These local awards benefit small business owners by providing the opportunity to review and assess their business operations and achievements and furthermore benefiting from local recognition and promotion, especially if they win a category.

The gala dinner that the Member refers to was an additional feature that provided an opportunity for local winners to compete against winners from other regions.

- (b) No. The previous government had only allocated funding for regional awards support up to the 2017–18 financial year.

Despite this, the SBDC has made a decision to allocate resources so they can continue to provide financial and in-kind support to the 18 local small business awards currently sponsored. Regional stakeholders have indicated that ongoing support for their local events is more important than a gala dinner, referred to by the Member, which is held in Perth. In light of this feedback, the SBDC has made a reasonable decision regarding the allocation of its resources.