



Presidents page January 2010

Dear Members and Friends,

My best wishes to you, your family and your staff for success in 2010.

The business environment, availability of credit and tax reform

I am pleased to report confidence remains positive in our Regions and the Top End. Demand remains generally strong, fortified by stimulus coming from the Federal and Territory Government's and private investment. Our membership numbers continue to grow in all regions.

In 2010, I believe we will continue to enjoy a busy working environment aided by a buoyant economy. Also, we will need to learn and comply with new industrial regulation (award modernisation and the forward with fairness legislation).

It seems credit is both less available and more costly. To ensure confidence and economic growth continues, on behalf of members locally and nationally (via the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)), the Chamber and ACCI have made representations to governments regarding the availability of credit on reasonable terms to small business (which contributes 40 per cent of private industry economic output and employs more than 5 million people).

On behalf of our members, ACCI has made representations to the Henry Tax Review. ACCI recognises the need for continual and ongoing re-evaluation of the tax system and is supportive of reform that will deliver better economic outcomes by encouraging the incentive to invest, workforce participation and risk taking and entrepreneurship.

ACCI has submitted a number of initiatives, including reducing personal income tax rates and thresholds over time and to gradually align the top marginal rate with the company tax rate; working towards the eventual abolition of payroll tax which is a tax on jobs; making progress on abolishing many state-based transaction taxes which are both inefficient and place cost imposts across business; and reducing complexity in the taxation system.

Territory 2030

On 2 December 2009, the Northern Territory government launched the Territory 2030 Strategic Plan, intended to be the government's road map for the future of the Territory.

The Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory commends the members of the Territory 2030 Steering Committee and the Northern Territory government for their efforts in preparing the Plan under the topics of Education; Society; Economic Sustainability; Health and Wellbeing; Environment; Knowledge, Creativity and Innovation.

Many of the initiatives of the plan are already underway; for example, establishing Darwin as a key centre for oil and gas operations, maintenance and workforce; and developing greater connections between business, Charles Darwin University and the Batchelor Institute.

The resources of the Chamber of Commerce, with its reach among almost 1,300 of the Territory's most substantial businesses, can assist the plan's expectation on the private sector to create the Territory's prosperity into the future and represent the business community in the implementation of the plan.

I wish you health and success in your endeavours.

Sincerely,

George Roussos
President, Chamber of Commerce, Northern Territory