

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRES, CLOSURE

**978. Mr B.J. GRYLLS to the Minister for Small Business:**

I refer to comments by a member of the Labor backbench that, following a recommendation from its razor gang, the Government intends to close the business enterprise centres.

- (1) Given that business enterprise centres play a vital role in regional Western Australia, will the minister immediately give an undertaking that he will not close or reduce the resources available to business enterprise centres during the remainder of his term of government?
- (2) If not, how many centres does the minister intend to close and what will be the value of the reduction in resources to those centres?

**Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The business enterprise centres are independent incorporated entities that receive core funding from the Government for facilitation services. They are funded via the Small Business Development Corporation's business enterprise centre network program. That program is the subject of a review following a recommendation arising from a statutory review of the Small Business Development Corporation. The outcome of the review will determine whether there will be any change to the use and associated resourcing of the centres by the State Government.
- (2) The ongoing use and resourcing of business enterprise centres by the Government will be determined when the review is completed.

While I am on my feet, I congratulate Footwear Industries Pty Ltd, the makers of Steel Blue, the most comfortable safety boot in the world.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.C. KUCERA: Whether or not the other side wants to hear it, this is an absolute success story for small business in this State. It is the kind of small business that the Small Business Development Corporation assists.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order the members for Warren-Blackwood and Hillarys.

Mr R.C. KUCERA: Over the past six years this company has built up a record that is the envy of businesses in this State. Footwear Industries not only is this year's Telstra Western Australian Small Business of the Year, but also was last Friday named the Telstra Australian Small Business of the Year. I congratulate it.