

**Senate Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Tourism and Resources Portfolio  
Budget Estimates 2006-2007, 29 May 2006

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND RESOURCES  
**TOPIC:** FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN SMALL BUSINESS  
**REFERENCE:** WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**QUESTION No.BI-54**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

How many women own a small business in Australia?

**ANSWER**

It is estimated that 529,000 women own a non-agricultural small business in Australia. (Source: ABS Cat. No. 8127.0, 2004, Characteristics of Small Business.)

**QUESTION No.BI-55**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

How many women are employees in a small business?

**ANSWER**

There are 3,783,900 female employees in Australian business in total. There is no estimate available of how many of these are employed by a small business. (Source: ABS Cat. No. 6105.0, August 2005, Labour Market Estimates.)

**QUESTION No.BI-56**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

What is the average age of women who own a small business?

**ANSWER**

The average age of a female non-agricultural small business owner is 44 years. (Source: ABS Cat. No. 8127.0, 2004, Characteristics of Small Business, unpublished data.)

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**QUESTION No.BI-57**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

Can you provide a breakdown of the age of women operating a small business?

**ANSWER**

A breakdown by age of female non-agricultural small business operators is provided in the following table.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>
Less than 30 years	43,400
30-50 years	333,600
Greater than 50 years	151,900

Source: ABS Cat. No. 8127.0, 2004, Characteristics of Small Business.

**QUESTION No.BI-58**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

Can you provide a breakdown of the industries operated by female small business owners?

**ANSWER**

An industry breakdown of small businesses owned by females is not available. However the following table provides a breakdown by industry of all businesses owned by females. As small businesses comprise approximately 97 per cent of all businesses, the data is indicative of the industries in which female-owned small businesses are operating.

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. businesses owned by females</b>
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	63,700
Mining	2,000
Manufacturing	41,000
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	300
Construction	54,600
Wholesale Trade	26,000
Retail Trade	92,000
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	29,100
Transport & Storage	18,800
Communication Services	6,700
Finance & Insurance	9,000
Property & Business Services	104,700
Education	23,300
Health & Community Services	50,800
Cultural & Recreational Services	20,200
Personal & Other Services	51,200

Source: ABS Cat. No. 6105.0, August 2005, Labour Market Estimates.

**QUESTION No.BI-59**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

Can you provide a breakdown of the number of women operating a small business in metro, regional, rural and remote areas?

**ANSWER**

No estimates are available from ABS sources.

**QUESTION No.BI-60**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

Does the department offer any funding or support specifically for female operators of small business?

**ANSWER**

The Office of Small Business does not offer any funding or support specifically for female operators of small business. However, funding for business skills development projects for female small business operators is available via the Building Entrepreneurship in Small Business Program. Female small business operators can also participate in other departmental programs.

**QUESTION No.BI-61**

**Senators Campbell and Sherry** asked:

Has the number of female small business owners risen, fallen or remained stable over the last decade – and can you provide that data to the committee?

**ANSWER**

The number of female non-agricultural small business operators increased from 424,300 in February 1995 to 529,000 in June 2004. This represents an increase in absolute terms, however the proportion of small business operators who are female has dropped slightly from 33.9 per cent in February 1995 to 31.9 per cent in June 2004. (Source: ABS Cat. No. 8127.0, 1995 and 2004, Characteristics of Small Business.)