

Media Release

For immediate use

5 March 2015

Small business should not be made to feel like second rate citizens.

No one group should feel they are not making a valuable contribution or missing out – that’s the message from VACC President, Peter Savige.

Speaking at last night’s prestigious VACC President’s Dinner, Mr Savige told politicians, business leaders, community groups and members of the automotive industry, that sometimes, ‘as a small business owner, I feel like a second rate citizen who is there to be taxed’.

Mr Savige called for all sections of society, including small business, to be made to feel included in decision making and consulted on key decisions.

“I am certainly not whinging because an important part of our social fabric and, in my view, the main reason Australia is successful, is because we, generally, do have a consultative society, where we have a voice and where outcomes are usually determined by consensus.

“However, small business often gets over looked or considered late in the piece, when some decisions have already been made. Often, members of the retail automotive industry exert a lot of time and energy unpicking reforms which would not have been made, had there been more consultation with small business in the first place.

“VACC’s 5,000 members in the retail, service and repair sector of the automotive industry are very much part of the social fabric. They have a can-do attitude and a mateship spirit. Their businesses ensure jobs, in fact, more than 50,000 of them, and provide valuable services to the community. Thanks to many VACC members, Victorians can travel to work in safe and reliable vehicles, visit friends and relatives, or operate their own business. So we’re all important and doing something worthwhile to contribute,” Mr Savige said.

Mr Savige was joined at the lectern by Deborah Glass, OBE, the Victorian Ombudsman, who provided valuable insight about the relationship between consumers and small business and how small business can use customer complaints to improve their business and service offering to the community.

Photo: VACC President Peter Savige