

**Mr BROCK (Frome) (14:24): My question is to the Minister for Small Business. Can the minister please advise of the introduction of the government's farming code of conduct and how it will benefit small business in South Australia?**

The Hon. T.R. KENYON (Newland—Minister for Manufacturing, Innovation and Trade, Minister for Small Business) (14:25): After the pioneering work of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure in getting the Small Business Commissioner set up, he has set about his work and is undertaking wide consultation. His first one, of course, follows from the work of the member for Light who pioneered the work in this place on the agricultural sector. As a result of the work that he did, flying in face of opposition from members of the opposition, I might say—people who did not seem to think it was worthwhile helping out people working in rural areas—the commissioner came up with the first code which was around farming.

What it does is give the Small Business Commissioner the opportunity to require people to come into mediation rather than go through a whole process after a dispute and go to court. Two businesses—a farmer being a business and a tractor salesman, for instance—may be in dispute. The farmer may bring that dispute to the Small Business Commissioner who can require a mediation process. He can also require one or both of the businesses to provide him with information. He can then require them to go into mediation and solve the dispute from there. He can issue fines for noncompliance, and he can also refer to a court for further fines in the event of serious breaches of the code.

This code reduces red tape and makes it easier for people to resolve disputes that sometimes are intractable. It is done with the help of \$257,000 out of the budget as part of our small business package, and it is an excellent innovation, largely as a result of the work of the former minister and one that I am very, very proud to continue. It has been widely consulted on right throughout the primary industry sector, including the South Australian Dairy Farmers Association, the South Australian Sheep Advisory Group, Primary Producers SA, South Australian Seafood Industry Federation, Food South Australia Inc., Grain Producers South Australia, Wine Grape Growers Australia, and various regional chambers of commerce, as well as regional local councils, amongst others. The farming code regulations are out for consultation and they are open for 28 days, from yesterday, until 11 October. People wishing to make a contribution may do so with the Small Business Commissioner, and I urge them to do so.