

Western Australia

**Small Business Development Corporation  
Act 1983**

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Western Australia

## **Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983**

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## **Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983**

**An Act to make provision for the establishment of a Small Business Development Corporation to encourage, promote, facilitate and assist the establishment, development, and carrying on of small business in the State and for incidental and other purposes.**

**1. Short title**

This Act may be cited as the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983*<sup>1</sup>.

**2. Commencement**

This Act shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation<sup>1</sup>.

**3. Interpretation**

(1) In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears —

**“appointed member”** means a person appointed by the Minister pursuant to section 5(1)(a) or (b) to be a member of the Corporation;

**“Chairman”** means the person appointed under section 5(1) to be the Chairman of the Corporation and includes a person acting in the office of Chairman;

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**“Corporation”** means the Small Business Development Corporation established under section 4(1);

**“Managing Director”** means the chief executive officer of the Corporation appointed under Part 3 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*;

**“member”** means a member of the Corporation appointed by or under section 5;

**“small business”** means a business undertaking —

(a) which is wholly owned and operated by an individual person or by individual persons in partnership or by a proprietary company within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth and which —

(i) has a relatively small share of the market in which it competes;

(ii) is managed personally by the owner or owners or directors, as the case requires; and

(iii) is not a subsidiary of, or does not form part of, a larger business or enterprise;

or

(b) which is declared by the Governor by Order in Council pursuant to subsection (2) to be a small business for the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Governor may, by Order in Council published in the *Government Gazette*, declare a business undertaking to be a small business for the purposes of this Act and by subsequent Order in Council so published vary or revoke that declaration.

*[Section 3 amended by No. 5 of 1998 s. 4 and 9; No. 10 of 2001 s. 221.]*

**4. The Corporation**

- (1) For the purposes of this Act, there shall be established a body corporate by the name of the “Small Business Development Corporation”.
- (2) Under its corporate name the Corporation —
  - (a) has perpetual succession and a common seal;
  - (b) may acquire, hold and dispose of real and personal property;
  - (c) may sue and be sued in any court;
  - (d) shall have and may exercise such powers, and shall perform such functions and duties, as are conferred or imposed upon it by or under this Act; and
  - (e) subject to this Act, is capable of doing and suffering all that bodies corporate may do and suffer.
- (3) Where in any judicial proceedings, whether under this Act or not, a document is produced bearing a seal purporting to be the common seal of the Corporation the court or tribunal before which those proceedings are brought shall in the absence of proof to the contrary presume that —
  - (a) the seal is the common seal of the Corporation; and
  - (b) the seal was duly affixed.
- (4) Regulations made under this Act may make provision as to the use of the common seal of the Corporation in the State and elsewhere.

**5. Composition of Corporation**

- (1) The Corporation shall consist of —
  - (a) one person appointed by the Minister as a member and Chairman of the Corporation;
  - (b) 6 persons appointed by the Minister as members of the Corporation, of whom 2 shall be persons representative

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of small business in the areas of the State outside the metropolitan region; and

(c) the Managing Director ex officio.

(1a) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b) —

**“metropolitan region”** has the same meaning as in the *Planning and Development Act 2005*.

(2) Subject to this Act each appointed member shall hold office for such period not exceeding 3 years as is specified in the instrument of his appointment, but is eligible for re-appointment.

(3) The Minister may grant leave of absence to an appointed member on such terms and conditions as the Minister determines.

(4) The Minister may terminate the appointment of an appointed member for inability, inefficiency or misbehaviour.

(5) If an appointed member —

- (a) is or becomes an undischarged bankrupt or person whose property is subject to an order or arrangement under the laws relating to bankruptcy;
- (b) has his appointment terminated by the Minister, pursuant to subsection (4);
- (c) is absent, except on leave duly granted by the Minister, from 3 consecutive meetings of the Corporation of which he has had notice; or
- (d) resigns his office by written notice addressed to the Minister,

the office of that member becomes vacant.

(6) The Minister may fill any vacancies in the office of member.

*[Section 5 amended by No. 73 of 1994 s. 4; No. 5 of 1998 s. 5 and 9; No. 38 of 2005 s. 15.]*



**6. Acting members**

- (1) Where —
- (a) an appointed member is absent or temporarily incapable of fulfilling the duties of a member; or
  - (b) the office of an appointed member is vacant and has not been filled in accordance with this Act,

the Minister may appoint a person to act in the place of that appointed member during that absence or incapability, or until the vacancy is filled, as the case requires, and a person so appointed has, while the appointment subsists, all the duties, powers and entitlements of, and the protection given to, the member in whose place the person is appointed to act.

- (2) The Minister, in the absence or incapacity of the Chairman or if that office is vacant, may appoint a person to act as Chairman and that person, while the appointment subsists, has all the functions, powers and duties of the Chairman.
- (3) The Managing Director may nominate, in writing delivered to the Chairman, an employee of the Corporation to represent him at any meeting at which he is unable to attend, and while so attending the person so nominated has the functions, powers and duties as a member, of the Managing Director.
- (4) The appointment of a person as an acting member or as acting Chairman, or the nomination of a person to represent the Managing Director, may be terminated at any time by the Minister.

**7. Remuneration of members**

- (1) A member, other than a member who is an officer in the Public Service of the State or employed by a State instrumentality, shall be paid such remuneration and allowances as the Minister from time to time on the recommendation of the Minister for Public Sector Management <sup>2</sup> determines.

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- (2) Acceptance of, or acting in, the office of member shall not of itself render the provisions of Part 3 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* or any other Act applying to persons as officers of the Public Service or employees of a State instrumentality applicable to that member or affect or prejudice the application to him of those provisions if they applied to him at the time of the acceptance of, or acting in, that office.

*[Section 7 amended by No. 32 of 1994 s. 19.]*

**8. Proceedings of the Corporation**

- (1) The Corporation shall hold its meetings at such place on such days and at such intervals as the Corporation shall from time to time determine.
- (2) At any meeting of the Corporation 4 members constitute a quorum.
- (3) At any meeting of the Corporation the Chairman, or in his absence a person appointed as acting Chairman, presides but where both are absent from a meeting of the corporation the members may appoint one of their number to preside at that meeting.
- (4) At any meeting of the Corporation —
- (a) each member present is entitled to a deliberative vote; and
  - (b) where the votes cast on any question are equally divided, the question shall be deemed lost.
- (5) The Corporation shall cause accurate minutes to be kept of the proceedings at its meetings.
- (6) To the extent that it is not prescribed, the Corporation may determine its own procedure.

**9. Matters not to be invalidated by vacancies, or defects in appointment**

No proceeding or act of the Corporation shall (if there is a quorum) be invalidated or illegal in consequence only of there being any vacancy in the or number of members at the time of that proceeding or act, or in consequence of there being some defect in the appointment of a person purporting to be a member.

**10. Liability of members**

A person who is or has been a member or acting member of the Corporation is not personally liable for anything done or omitted in good faith in, or in connection with, the exercise or purported exercise of any power conferred, or the carrying out of any duty imposed, on the Corporation by this Act.

**11. Powers and functions of the Corporation**

- (1) Subject to the general direction and control of the Minister the Corporation shall the administer this Act.
- (2) The functions of the Corporation are —
  - (a) to take such steps and do such acts and things as are necessary for the promotion and development of small business and to provide assistance for the establishment, development and carrying on of small business throughout the State;
  - (b) of its own motion, to make representations, to tender advice and make reports to the Minister on any matter or thing relating to, or affecting small business;
  - (c) at the request of the Minister to investigate any matter affecting small business referred to it by the Minister and to report to the Minister thereon;
  - (d) to establish and maintain liaison between associations or groups of people representing or servicing small business and the Government of the State;

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- (e) to investigate the effect upon small business of policies of Governments, Acts of Parliament (whether of the Commonwealth or a State or Territory of the Commonwealth) or subordinate legislation made thereunder and to advise and keep the Minister informed thereon;
- (f) to provide to any person, association or group of people an advisory and administrative service for, or in connection with the establishment, carrying on, expansion and development of any small business;
- (g) to arrange and co-ordinate training, educational and skill development programmes for small business;
- (h) to establish and maintain an information centre containing a comprehensive selection of literature, manuals, brochures, audio visual material, technical data, business profiles and the like;
- (i) to carry out research and to publish and distribute information, technical data and the like for the guidance of small business;
- (j) to engage the services of suitable consultants where appropriate to provide surveys, technical data, statistics, professional opinions or other information for the purposes of this Act;
- (k) to counsel small business on the availability of finance and the means of obtaining financial assistance;
- (l) to promote and co-ordinate the provision of venture capital to small business;
- (m) to recommend to the Minister ways and means by which incentives and financial assistance, including guarantees, may be provided for small business; and
- (n) to promote public awareness of the importance of matters relating to the activities of small business and to inform the public concerning the value of sound business practice.

- (3) The Corporation has power to do all things necessary or convenient for or in connection with the performance of its functions and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may —
- (a) raise fees or charges with respect to the provision of services or the performance of any work by, or on behalf of, the Corporation;
  - (b) own, lease, rent or otherwise acquire suitable premises or accommodation for its staff, records and facilities; and
  - (c) open and maintain an account at a bank approved by the Treasurer.
- (4) The Minister may from time to time give directions to the Corporation with respect to its functions, powers and duties, either generally or with respect to a particular matter, and the Corporation shall give effect to those directions.

**11A. Delegation**

- (1) The Corporation may, by instrument in writing, delegate the performance of any of its functions, except this power of delegation.
- (2) A delegation under subsection (1) may be made to —
- (a) the Managing Director;
  - (b) an appointed member;
  - (c) a person employed by the Corporation under section 15;
  - (d) a person engaged by the Corporation under section 16; or
  - (e) with the approval of the Minister, any other person.
- (3) A delegate cannot subdelegate the performance of any function unless he or she is expressly authorised by the instrument of delegation to do so.

**s. 11B**

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- (4) A function performed by a delegate is to be taken to be performed by the Corporation.
- (5) A delegate performing a function under this section is to be taken to do so in accordance with the terms of the delegation unless the contrary is shown.
- (6) Nothing in this section is to be read as limiting the ability of the Corporation to act through its officers and agents in the normal course of business.

*[Section 11A inserted by No. 5 of 1998 s. 6.]*

**11B. Minister may give directions**

- (1) The Minister may give directions in writing to the Corporation with respect to the performance of its functions, either generally or in relation to a particular matter, and the Corporation is to give effect to any such direction.
- (2) The text of a direction given under subsection (1) is to be —
  - (a) laid before each House of Parliament within 14 sitting days of that House after the direction is given; and
  - (b) included in the annual report submitted by the accountable authority of the Corporation under section 66 of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985*.

*[Section 11B inserted by No. 5 of 1998 s. 6.]*

**11C. Minister to have access to information**

- (1) The Minister is entitled —
  - (a) to have information in the possession of the Corporation; and
  - (b) where the information is in or on a document, to have, and make and retain copies of, that document.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1) the Minister may —

- (a) request the Corporation to furnish information to the Minister;
  - (b) request the Corporation to give the Minister access to information;
  - (c) for the purposes of paragraph (b) make use of a member of staff of the Corporation to obtain the information and furnish it to the Minister.
- (3) The Corporation is to comply with a request under subsection (2) and make its facilities and members of staff available to the Minister for the purposes of paragraph (c) of that subsection.
- (4) In this section —
- “document”** includes any tape, disc or other device or medium on which information is recorded or stored mechanically, photographically, electronically or otherwise;
- “information”** means information specified, or of a description specified, by the Minister that relates to the functions of the Corporation.

*[Section 11C inserted by No. 5 of 1998 s. 6.]*

*[12. Repealed by No. 5 of 1998 s. 7.]*

### **13. Powers, functions and duties of Managing Director**

The Managing Director shall, under the Corporation, administer the day to day operations of the Corporation and generally has and may exercise the powers and shall perform the functions and duties conferred or imposed upon him by or under this Act.

### **14. Acting appointments**

- (1) Where —
- (a) the Managing Director is absent or temporarily incapable of fulfilling his duties as Managing Director;
- or

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(b) the office of Managing Director is vacant,

the Minister may appoint an employee of the Corporation to act in the office of Managing Director during that absence or incapacity or until the vacancy is filled, as the case requires, and that person has, while his appointment subsists all the powers, functions and duties of the Managing Director.

- (2) Any reference in this Act to the Managing Director shall be construed as including a reference to a person appointed by the Minister pursuant to subsection (1) to act in the office of Managing Director.

**15. Employees of the Corporation**

- (1) Subject to this Act, the Corporation may, from time to time, employ such persons as it considers necessary to enable the Corporation to carry out its functions.
- (2) Persons employed under subsection (1) may be employed on a full time or part time basis.
- (3) Subject to any relevant award or industrial agreement<sup>3</sup> under the *Industrial Relations Act 1979*<sup>4</sup>, the Corporation may determine the remuneration and other terms and conditions of service of its employees.
- (4) Part 3 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* does not apply to or in relation to an employee of the Corporation.

*[Section 15 amended by No. 32 of 1994 s. 19.]*

**15A. Status of Managing Director and other employees of Corporation who are members of Senior Executive Service**

Notwithstanding anything in sections 12, 13, 14 and 15, to the extent that there is in the case of a person who is —

- (a) appointed under section 12 to be the Managing Director of the Corporation; or
- (b) employed under section 15,



and who is a member of the Senior Executive Service within the meaning of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*<sup>5</sup> an inconsistency between this Act and that Act that Act shall prevail.

*[Section 15A inserted by No. 113 of 1987 s. 32.]*

**16. Professional or technical assistance**

The Corporation may engage under contract for services such professional and technical or other assistance as may be necessary to enable the Corporation to perform effectively its functions under this Act.

**17. Use of staff and facilities of departments and instrumentalities**

The Corporation may by arrangement with the Minister concerned and on such terms and conditions as may be mutually arranged with that Minister and with the relevant employing authority within the meaning of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, make use, either full time or part time, of—

- (a) the services of any officer or employee employed in the Public Service of the State or in a State instrumentality or otherwise in the service of the Crown in right of the State; or
- (b) any facilities of a department of the Public Service of the State or of a State instrumentality.

*[Section 17 amended by No. 32 of 1994 s. 19.]*

**18. Confidentiality**

- (1) A person to whom this subsection applies must not, directly or indirectly, record, disclose or make use of any information obtained in the course of duty except —
  - (a) for the purpose of performing functions under this Act;
  - (b) as required or allowed by this Act or under another law;

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- (c) with the written consent of the person to whom the information relates; or
- (d) in prescribed circumstances.

Penalty: \$10 000.

- (2) Subsection (1) applies to any person who is or has been —
  - (a) the Managing Director;
  - (b) an appointed member;
  - (c) employed by the Corporation under section 15;
  - (d) engaged by the Corporation under section 16; or
  - (e) a delegate under section 11A(2)(e).

*[Section 18 inserted by No. 5 of 1998 s. 8.]*

**19. Funds**

- (1) The funds available for the purpose of enabling the Corporation to perform its functions under this Act consist of —
  - (a) moneys from time to time appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of this Act;
  - (b) all moneys received by the Corporation for services provided under the authority of this Act;
  - (c) any other moneys made available for the purposes of this Act.
- (2) The moneys referred to in subsection (1) shall be —
  - (a) credited to an account at the Treasury, forming part of the Trust Fund constituted under section 9 of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985*; or
  - (b) paid into and placed to the credit of an account at a bank approved by the Treasurer,

and the account is to be called the Small Business Development Corporation Account.

- (3) All expenditure incurred by the Corporation for the purpose of giving effect to this Act shall be charged to the Small Business Development Corporation Account.
- (4) Moneys standing to the credit of the Small Business Development Corporation Account shall be applied by the Corporation only for the purposes of this Act.

*[Section 19 amended by No. 49 of 1996 s. 61 and 64.]*

**20. Power to invest**

Any money standing to the credit of the Small Business Development Corporation Account which is not immediately required for the purposes of this Act may, with the approval of the Treasurer be invested by the Corporation in any manner approved under the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985* for the investment of moneys standing to the credit of the Public Bank Account.

*[Section 20 amended by No. 98 of 1985 s. 3.]*

**21. Application of *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985***

The provisions of the *Financial Administration and Audit Act 1985* regulating the financial administration, audit and reporting of statutory authorities apply to and in respect of the Corporation and its operations.

*[Section 21 inserted by No. 98 of 1985 s. 3.]*

*[22-23. Repealed by No. 98 of 1985 s. 3.]*

**24. Regulations**

The Governor may make regulations prescribing all matters that are required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed, or are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for giving effect to the purposes of this Act.

*[25. Omitted under the Reprints Act 1984 s. 7(4)(e).]*

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> This is a compilation of the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983* and includes the amendments made by the other written laws referred to in the following table. The table also contains information about any reprint.

**Compilation table**

<b>Short title</b>	<b>Number and year</b>	<b>Assent</b>	<b>Commencement</b>
<i>Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983</i>	46 of 1983	5 Dec 1983	1 Jan 1984 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 30 Dec 1983 p. 5137)
<i>Acts Amendment (Financial Administration and Audit) Act 1985 s. 3</i>	98 of 1985	4 Dec 1985	1 Jul 1986 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 30 Jun 1986 p. 2255)
<i>Acts Amendment (Public Service) Act 1987 s. 32</i>	113 of 1987	31 Dec 1987	16 Mar 1988 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 16 Mar 1988 p. 813)
<i>Acts Amendment (Public Sector Management) Act 1994 s. 19</i>	32 of 1994	29 Jun 1994	1 Oct 1994 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 30 Sep 1994 p. 4948)
<i>Statutes (Repeals and Minor Amendments) Act 1994 s. 4</i>	73 of 1994	9 Dec 1994	9 Dec 1994 (see s. 2)
<i>Financial Legislation Amendment Act 1996 s. 61 and 64</i>	49 of 1996	25 Oct 1996	25 Oct 1996 (see s. 2(1))
<i>Small Business Development Corporation Amendment Act 1998</i>	5 of 1998	30 Apr 1998	30 Apr 1998 (see s. 2)

<b>Short title</b>	<b>Number and year</b>	<b>Assent</b>	<b>Commencement</b>
<i>Corporations (Consequential Amendments) Act 2001</i> s. 221	10 of 2001	28 Jun 2001	15 Jul 2001 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 29 Jun 2001 p. 3257 and <i>Cwlth Gazette</i> 13 Jul 2001 No. S285)
<b>Reprint of the <i>Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983</i> as at 7 Dec 2001</b> (includes amendments listed above)			
<i>Planning and Development (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2005</i> s. 15	38 of 2005	12 Dec 2005	9 Apr 2006 (see s. 2 and <i>Gazette</i> 21 Mar 2006 p. 1078)

- <sup>2</sup> Under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* s. 112(2), a reference in a written law to the Public Service Board is, unless the contrary intention appears or it is otherwise provided under the *Acts Amendment (Public Sector Management) Act 1994*, to be construed as if it had been amended to be a reference to the Minister for Public Sector Management (as defined in the *Interpretation Act 1984*). This reference was amended under the *Reprints Act 1984* s. 7(5)(a).
- <sup>3</sup> Reference altered under the *Acts Amendment and Repeal (Industrial Relations) Act (No. 2) 1984* s. 88(3).
- <sup>4</sup> Under the *Interpretation Act 1984* s. 16, a reference to the *Industrial Arbitration Act 1979* may be read as a reference to the *Industrial Relations Act 1979*. The reference was changed under the *Reprints Act 1984* s. 7(3)(g).
- <sup>5</sup> Under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* s. 112(1), a reference to the *Public Service Act 1978* is to be read as a reference to the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*. The reference was changed under the *Reprints Act 1984* s. 7(3)(g).