



10

PRIME MINISTER

MINISTERIAL CHANGES

The Honourable Geoff Prosser MP has resigned from the Ministry today. His resignation letter and my response are attached.

I thank Geoff Prosser for the work he has done for the Coalition, both as a Minister and before that as Shadow Minister for Finance.

Responsibility for small business matters will now be assumed by Mr Peter Reith who will retain his responsibility for Industrial Relations and will become the Minister for Workplace Relations and Small Business.

The transfer of the small business responsibility to a senior Cabinet Minister emphasises the Government's strong belief that small business has a critical role to play in the employment and economic future of Australia.

Mr Reith's role as Minister assisting the Prime Minister in Public Service Matters will be assumed by Dr David Kemp MP, Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training.

Senator Chris Ellison of Western Australia will be the new Minister. He will become the Minister for Customs and Consumer Affairs. He will also have the additional responsibility of Minister assisting the Attorney General. His particular focus in that role will be the Justice aspects of the Attorney General's portfolio.

In recognition of Mr Reith's increased responsibilities, Mr Alan Cadman MP will become his Parliamentary Secretary. Mr Reith will retain his duties as Leader of the House.

Mr Neil Andrew MP, the Member for Wakefield will be the new Chief Government Whip.

Mrs Trish Worth MP will become the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health in place of Senator Ellison.

Mr Peter Slipper MP, Member for Fisher in Queensland, will replace Mrs Worth in her former role as Government Whip.

11 July 1997



jkl

PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

11 July 1997

Hon Geoff Prosser MP
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

My dear Geoff,

Thank you for your letter submitting your resignation from the Ministry.

I know that the events of the past few weeks, and most particularly recent days, would have been very difficult for you. In submitting your resignation you have placed the interests of the government and the Liberal Party first and foremost.

I greatly appreciate the way in which you have handled such a difficult issue. I am sure that your parliamentary colleagues will endorse my view.

I wish to record my gratitude for the work you have done as a member of the Ministry since March of last year. In particular, I mention the Bell Committee on Small Business Deregulation whose recommendations were overwhelmingly implemented and have brought immense benefits to small business in Australia.

You will, I am sure, continue to make a strong contribution to both the government and the Liberal Party.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

John Howard
(John Howard)



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE HON. GEOFF PROSSER, MP
MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR CUSTOMS

July 11, 1997

My dear Prime Minister,

Over the past few weeks the media and the Opposition have sought to make my presence in the Ministry the focus of attention rather than the broader policy issues and achievements of your Government.

I appreciate that this is now distracting the community and diverting Government resources and energy from the central task we have at hand - that of job creation and revitalising the small business sector.

I am proud of our achievements to date for the small business sector and am confident that the Government will continue with these policies in the future.

However, to ensure that the Australian people can have the proper focus on the issues, I consider that I can best serve the Government by resigning from the Ministry and therefore do formally submit to you my resignation as Minister for Small Business and Consumer Affairs and Minister responsible for Customs.

I have enjoyed serving in the Ministry and would be available to serve in the Ministry in any future Government if the opportunity arose.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoff Prosser".

GEOFF PROSSER MP