



Weekly Brief

from the London Press and Public Affairs Office

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Week 43 of 2009 Friday 30 October 2009

Don't make the Pre-Budget taxing for small firms

The FSB has released a report by the [Centre for Economics and Business Research](#) which found that raising taxes for small firms in the Pre-Budget Report could cause deeper unemployment, which was covered by the [Daily Telegraph](#). Read the [press release](#) and view the FSB's [Pre-Budget report submission](#).

Counting the cost of postal strikes

An [FSB survey](#) this week found that national postal strikes could cost small businesses anywhere between £500 and £5,000, as industrial action continues. The FSB is raising awareness of the impact of the dispute on small businesses and is urging the Communication Workers Union and Royal Mail to return to the negotiating table. View the FSB on [Channel 4 News](#) and read coverage in [The Times](#).

Bank bonuses

The FSB has welcomed a proposal by Shadow Chancellor George Osborne to limit bank bonuses and to instead lend the money to viable small businesses and homeowners. Read the FSB response in the [Guardian](#), the [Daily Telegraph](#) and the [Daily Express](#).

Pub Companies are unfair

The FSB was disappointed by the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT) response to a 'super complaint' from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). CAMRA had called on the OFT to take action against anti-competitive practices in the UK pub market. The OFT's response found no significant cause for concern and declined to act further. [The FSB will continue to campaign for change](#).

Share your views on procurement

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) is developing an e-learning procurement course to help businesses bid for public sector contracts. BIS would like to hear from businesses that have successfully gone through the procurement process. [Email your experiences](#) under the categories of *Value for Money*; Offering innovation solutions; Socially responsible/environmental; Cost effectiveness; Quality of Services; Responsiveness; Personalised and locally available service; Flexibility; Innovation; No bid case study - was there an opportunity that seemed worth bidding for but after further research was found not viable due to a particular reason; Unique Selling point

Do you run a small haulage company or are you an owner driver?

Transport group Freight Best Practice has published a free guide describing the options available to smaller fleets and drivers wishing to improve the efficiency of their operation. The Efficient Operations for Small Fleets and Owner Drivers Guide is free of charge and can be obtained by calling the Freight Best Practice Hotline on 0845 877 0 877 or by visiting www.freightbestpractice.org.uk

Fire regulation

The FSB Health and Safety Committee is seeking views on how useful Government guidance on implementing the regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005 titled 'Do you have paying guests' has been. [Email your experiences](#).

FSB gives oral evidence to House of Lords

FSB EU and International Affairs Chairman Tina Sommer and FSB Policy Adviser Sietske de Groot this week gave oral evidence to the House of Lords on the better regulation agenda. [Listen to what they said](#).

The end for childcare vouchers?

Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced that tax relief on childcare vouchers will be coming to an end during his party conference speech last month. Do you provide childcare vouchers as a benefit in your business? [Tell us how these changes will affect you](#).

Consumer protection

The Office of Fair Trading would like to talk to businesses having problems complying with consumer protection regulations as well as motivations for compliance. [Email us](#) to take part in a confidential discussion.

New BBC programme

Have you invented the next big thing? Maybe it's a new toy or game, a tasty twist on food or drink, a design sensation or something special for the home and garden? BBC1 would like to follow the people who think they have what it takes to make their dream come true. Are you up for a challenge? Can you impress top industry experts? [Email](#) or call 0207 438 1865

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Have a good weekend!