



Australian
Competition &
Consumer
Commission

PUBLIC WARNING NOTICE

issued under section 223 of the Australian Consumer Law
in relation to

AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS FUNDING CENTRE PTY LTD (also known as Australian Business Finance Centre or ABFC)

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is warning small business about the alleged conduct of Australian Business Funding Centre Pty Ltd (ACN 147 408 866).

The Australian Business Funding Centre also uses the names Australian Business Financing Centre or ABFC and operates the website www.australiangovernmentgrants.org.

ABFC purports to offer, for a fee, the service of a searchable online database of Australian government grants and loans for Australian businesses.

The ACCC has received numerous complaints from small businesses alleging ABFC made false or misleading representations on its website and over the phone:

- a) about the availability and extent of government grants a small business was eligible to receive;
- b) about the uses and benefits of ABFC's online searchable database of government grants and loans; and
- c) that the small businesses providing testimonials on the 'success stories' section of ABFC's website had used the ABFC service to obtain government grants, when this was not the case.

Small businesses who signed up to access ABFC's database have advised the ACCC they paid fees ranging from \$497 to \$701, only to find there were no suitable grants or they were not eligible for any grants listed in the database.

The ACCC is issuing this Public Warning Notice because it:

- a. has reasonable grounds to suspect the conduct which is the subject of this warning constitutes the making of false or misleading representations about:
 - (i) the uses and benefits of ABFC's database, in contravention of section 29(1)(g) of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL); and
 - (ii) the 'success stories' testimonials on ABFC's website, in contravention of section 29(1)(f) of the ACL;
- b. is satisfied that one or more persons has suffered, or is likely to suffer, detriment as a result of the alleged conduct; and
- c. is satisfied that it is in the public interest to issue this Public Warning Notice.

Michael Theodore Schaper
Acting Chair

Sign:

Date:

27 June 2016