Government’s Role in Assisting SMEs Faced with Changing Environment

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There is a fairly simple message here…

SMEs involved in global chains need to think beyond the local, beyond their regular suppliers
Role for Government in two areas:

1. Provide support to businesses to understand their supply chain risks and prepare for possible disasters.

2. Provide help to communities in the aftermath of a disaster event.
Australia – a national project to encourage SMEs to undertake better disaster preparation through Business Continuity Planning

- Business.gov.au provides information on planning.

- Better cross Government agency coordination.

- Government can take a role.
Awareness of the Business Continuity Planning process

- Smaller businesses lack the resources and time.

- Strong role for government to collate and make information available to the SME sector.

- Information on potential threats and risk mitigation.
Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Measures

- Category A – personal hardship and distress assistance to individuals
  - Food, clothing, accommodation, repairs to homes, counselling
- Category B – restoration or replacement of essential public assets
  - Roads, schools, and bridges
  - Allows rebuilding to more disaster-resilient standards
  - Provides for concessional interest rate loans to small business
- Category C – Community Recovery Package
  - Restores social networks
  - May include clean-up and recovery grants to small business
- Category D – intended for severe events
A general principle of the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements is that assistance is not to supplant or operate as a disincentive for self-help through insurance or other mitigation strategies such as Business Continuity Plans.
Conclusions

- Role of government to facilitate and provide information that is accessible and useable.

- More hands-on approach in the immediate aftermath of disasters.

- Responsibility still rests with individual owners and managers to understand the needs of their own operation and the risks it may face.
Thank you

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