

# Push to aid tender success

VALERINA CHANGARATHIL



**STRONG BID:** Sage Automation SA general manager Justin Kahl. **Picture:** TAIT SCHMAAL

SA businesses will be more “ready to tender” for a share of the State Government’s annual \$11 billion procurement spending, according to Industry Advocate Ian Nightingale.

After an effort spanning six months and consultation with a number of industry and government experts, the Office of the Industry Advocate will this week launch Ready To Tender, a new self-help online resource that offers guidance to businesses vying for government tenders. Ready To Tender will guide businesses through four modules, giving them a better chance of success.

“This is about building capability of businesses and making them ‘match-fit’ for government work.

“The important message, perhaps not exclusively, is that this online platform is more for those businesses looking for smaller contracts (under \$4 million) or those tendering in their own right.

“But with procurement you can only give business information. They have to be able to understand the tender, its rules, and assess if their business fits in with the services needed,” he said.

The online platform, which will be officially launched at Business SA tomorrow, is complementary to the OIA’s regional and Adelaide Supplying to Government Workshops, which allow for face-to-face interaction and support.

The effort to help more of the 140,000 small businesses in SA – 98 per cent of total businesses – get a share of government work comes as the South Australian Productivity Commission prepares a final report on the

second stage of its Procurement Inquiry, to be presented to the government on October 31.

Previously it has found a "clear need to increase the capacity of businesses to compete in government procurement".

"I want to see local businesses being as competitive as possible when quoting or tendering for government work," Mr Nightingale said.

"When the government spends money, this expenditure multiplies as it filters through the economy and importantly if it's spent locally this doesn't stop with the first transaction."

Tonsley-based SAGE Automation sees 30-40 per cent of its \$36 million annual SA turnover coming from government contracts.

"We bid for both small and large contracts, working directly with departments and other contractors," Justin Kahl, SAGE Automation's SA general manager, said.

"We have been using the OIA for a while for guidance and feedback on our tenders as part of our objective to ensure most of the government work is delivered locally.

"An online training module should be a good resource for existing as well as new contractors wanting to work with government." SAGE has won work with the state Department of Transport and Infrastructure. "We recently delivered the Torrens to Torrens project where we did some intelligent transport systems (ITS) work, which covers the design, install and electricals for the signs, safety cameras, road parks, electrical engineering works," Mr Kahl said. SAGE built and installed 40 of "smart" roadside field cabinets for the contract.

This is about building capability of businesses

## **I A N N I G H T I N G A L E**