

# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2015

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## GOVT ANNOUNCES NEW FIVE-TIER NATIONAL TERRORISM THREAT ADVISORY SYSTEM

The Federal Government has announced the new [National Terrorism Threat Advisory System](#), which introduces a five-tier system (Not Expected, Possible, Probable, Expected, Certain) to replace the previous four-tier system (Low, Medium, High, Extreme). The Attorney-General, George Brandis, has suggested the new system will help provide more nuanced information in relation to the nature of the threat. The new alert system has been designed to be more accessible and easy to understand. The previous threat level, announced on 11 September 2014, was 'High'. The threat level is unchanged, but is now defined as 'Probable'. The Government's National Security [website](#) provides relevant information on the national security environment.

## GOVERNMENT RELEASES RESPONSE TO HARPER COMPETITION POLICY REVIEW

The Federal Government has released its [response](#) to the [Competition Policy Review Final Report](#), supporting a majority of its 56 recommendations ([Shop Talk 4/6/15](#)). The Government has acknowledged that many reform areas are the responsibility of the States and Territories and has flagged the possibility of incentive payments where "the actual implementation of reforms" improves productivity and leads to economic growth. Where the jurisdictions do retain control, the Government has indicated that it won't dictate reform requirements and that the States and Territories can choose the reform they embark. A range of retail-related issues are covered in the response, ranging from the hot issue of deregulating trading hours, to pharmacy location rules, book selling and planning and zoning. There is a range of implementation risks, not least of which is likely resistance from traditional reform opponents, and some recommendations are repeats of those from previous inquiries which have seen little progress. But we hope the Government's imprimatur will speed up the reform program and help sway traditional opponents on certain issues. We provided a detailed submission to Treasury on the Harper's Final Report in May ([Shop Talk 4/6/15](#)).

## TAX REFORM OPTIONS PAPER TO BE RELEASED IN 2016, NOT BY END OF YEAR

The Federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, has publically noted that the anticipated tax reform Options (Green) Paper will be released in 2016, not by the end of this year as initially expected. The Treasurer has not outlined the exact timing, but has noted that "this is a package about how to grow the economy – not just how you might seek to change the tax system". The Shopping Centre Council is currently undertaking analysis on a range of taxation issues that affect the shopping centre and retail sector in preparation for the Options Paper.

## TRADING HOURS BILL NOW BEFORE THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT

The WA Government continues its incremental reform of retail trading hours ([Shop Talk 15/10/15](#)), having tabled the [Retail Trading Hours Amendment Bill](#) in the Parliament. This Bill seeks to extend trading hours for general retail shops in the metropolitan area so that they may trade between 7am to 9pm on weekdays (currently 8am to 9pm) and between 7am to 6pm on Saturdays (currently 8am to 5pm). The Federal Government's response to the Competition Policy Review presents the WA Government with an opportunity to hasten the pace of trading hour reform to deliver tangible economic gains for the state.

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION DECIDES CHRISTMAS TRADING IN REGIONAL Q'LAND

Some large shops and shopping centres in those areas of regional Queensland still to win Sunday trading, were facing a four-day shut down this year because of Boxing Day falling on Saturday and the substitute holiday on the following Monday. The QIRC has rejected an application to permit trading on both Sunday (27/12) and Monday (28/12) but has allowed trading on Monday (28/12) from 8am to 5pm. A three-day shutdown, at the busiest retailing time of the year, demonstrates the need for implementation of the Harper reforms. The Shopping Centre Council appeared before the hearing.

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