

# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

FRIDAY 21 JULY 2017

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## COAG ENERGY COUNCIL MEETING AND INTEREST FROM SMALL BUSINESS OMBUDSMAN

Australia's energy and resource ministers met as the COAG Energy Council last week to discuss ongoing efforts to deliver on their collective priority to ensure "secure, reliable, and affordable energy for all Australians while reducing emissions". The meeting [communiqué](#) details that the Energy Council received an update from ACCC Chair, Rod Sims, on the ongoing inquiry into electricity supply and prices ([Shop Talk 9/6/17](#)), and agreed to 49 of the 50 recommendations from the Independent Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market (the 'Finkel Review'). Ministers agreed to establish a new group which will include the respective heads of the Australian Energy Market Commission, the Australian Energy Market Operator and the Australian Energy Regulator. To be called the Energy Security Board, this group will "provide whole-of-system oversight for energy security and reliability of the (National Electricity Market) and be integral to improving long-term planning". In the days following the meeting, the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Kate Carnell AO, weighed into the national energy debate. In a [media statement](#), Ms Carnell says that "small business operators are the forgotten people in Australia's energy crisis" and that "if we don't fix the policy settings there will be small business closures and job losses, it's as simple as that".

## GUIDELINE ON EQUITY AND FAIRNESS IN RATING FOR QUEENSLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning has released a [Guideline on equity and fairness in rating for Queensland local governments](#). The Guideline is "intended to promote best practice and greater consistency of rating practices" across Queensland. The Shopping Centre Council engaged in the development of the Guideline, noting that the State's rating system is one of the worst in Australia and results in highly volatile rates which are detached from underlying statutory valuations. We will watch with interest whether these non-statutory Guidelines will deliver much needed improvements at the local level.

## ANOTHER CITIES POLICY THING IS RELEASED FOR COMMENT

Shop Talk readers would know we are fairly bemused by the significance given to the Federal Government's 'cities' agenda. While there seems to be a lot of brochures and papers, lofty goals and agreeable commentary, we still can't quite work out what this agenda will drive or achieve in a practical sense. (The ongoing Federal Parliamentary inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities ([Shop Talk 16/6/17](#)) suggests that the Federal Government may be still looking for a clear answer, too). This bemusement is reinforced when we, and other stakeholders, continue to actively engage with dedicated and applied groups which are actually 'doing' city planning, including the Greater Sydney Commission, while theatrics at the federal level continue. This week saw the latest injection of 'cities policy' development at the federal level through the release of the [National Cities Performance Framework Interim Report](#). This report aims to "bring together critical data in an easily accessible online format" to "measure the performance of Australia's largest cities". It remains unclear to us who would be accountable for measurement (some of which defaults to ABS datasets), who would use the outputs, what levers would be used, and what actions arise from this initiative. We can't help but feel this is measurement for the sake of it, to feed into commentary for the sake of it. We are happy to be proven wrong, but we're also happy to make a prediction that this will largely go nowhere in its own right.

## 2017 SCCA MARKETING AWARDS: NOMINATIONS CLOSE 7 AUGUST!

Nominations for the 2017 SCCA Marketing Awards will close on Monday 7 August. Please see the [2017 Call for Entries Booklet](#) for more details. This year the SCCA Marketing Awards Gala Dinner will be held on Wednesday 25 October 2017 from 6:00pm at Doltone House, Jones Bay Wharf. Tickets will be available for purchase on Tuesday 8 August 2017 from the Awards [website](#).

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