

SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

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GST LOW VALUE THRESHOLD: AMAZON TO BLOCK ACCESS TO SOME INTERNATIONAL SITES

Amazon has recently announced it intends to block Australian consumers from accessing its international sites as a response to the Government's lowering of the \$1,000 GST Low Value Threshold (LVT) from 1 July 2018 ([Shop Talk, 23/6/17](#)). This comes twelve-months after online platforms raised the prospect of blocking consumers from their overseas sites, when the legislation was being considered in the Senate ([Shop Talk 21/4/17](#)). At the time, eBay stated: "regrettably, the Government's legislation may force Australians from buying from foreign sellers". In responding to Amazon's decision, Federal Treasurer, Scott Morrison, has strongly defended the decision to close the LVT loophole, stating: "if multinationals aren't forced to pay their fair share of tax, they will have a competitive advantage over retailers here in Australia, on our own main streets and in our shopping centres".

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RELEASES PLANNING GREEN PAPER

Having set in train an [independent review](#) of the planning system in late 2017, the Western Australian Government has recently released a [Green Paper](#) for public comment. The Green Paper proposes a number of reform areas to make the planning system "more efficient, open and understandable to everyone". These include strategic planning, system legibility, transparency, efficiency and delivering smart growth. The Paper contemplates activity centre structure planning and proposes the standardisation of zones, land-uses and land use permissibility for Perth and major regional centres. In an associated [media release](#), the Minister for Planning, Rita Saffioti, states that "this paper acknowledges that whilst the planning system has supported the growth of the State, it has become complex and difficult to understand". Feedback via the Green Paper process will inform a White Paper for Government consideration. Submissions in response to the Green Paper are being welcomed until 20 July. The Shopping Centre Council will review the detail of the Green Paper and engage as necessary.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON RED TAPE: INQUIRY INTO OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING

The Shopping Centre Council has lodged a [submission](#) to the Senate Committee undertaking an inquiry into the impact on the economy and community of occupational licensing ([Shop Talk 6/4/18](#)). Following the successful commercial real estate licensing reforms in South Australia ([Shop Talk 11/8/17](#)), NSW ([Shop Talk 4/8/16](#)) and Queensland ([Shop Talk 30/10/14](#)), we have proposed that the Committee recommends that further real estate licensing reform be prioritised and implemented in other jurisdictions (e.g. Victoria, Western Australia). The positive experience in the jurisdictions which have already acted has demonstrated that such reform is low-risk and low cost to Government. We have specifically noted the redundant notion that large, sophisticated shopping centre companies want or need regulatory protection. The inquiry reporting date is still to be advised.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TRADING HOURS: 100 DAY ELECTION COMMITMENT

The South Australian Government is moving forward with its '100-day' election commitment to introduce legislation to reform (a partial 'deregulation') current shop trading hour laws. In its pre-election policy document, titled [Shop Trading Hours - Reducing Red Tape](#), the now Government states that reforming trading hours "will provide an enormous boost to local business, greater choice and flexibility for consumers, and more opportunities for South Australians working in retail". The Leader of the Opposition, Peter Malinauskas, has publicly indicated a willingness to consider a compromise on additional hours on Sunday mornings, but has indicated the Opposition will oppose any change to public holidays and additional hours on weekends. Minor parties have publicly indicated a general resistance to 'deregulation', but have indicated a willingness to discuss reform options further with the Government. As the Government does not control the upper house, it is likely that there is some way to go on this issue.

PREVIOUS ISSUES