



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Thursday 11 August 2011

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SENSIBLE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION

The Productivity Commission's recommendations on planning and zoning, in the [draft report](#) of its retailing inquiry, have been interpreted by some analysts as 'bad news' for shopping centres. The simplistic argument is that they will lead to greater retail competition. This misses the point. The SCCA has never been concerned about more competition. Our concern has always been *unfair* competition as a result of some retail formats being given special planning permission to locate in areas from which shopping centres will always be excluded. The Productivity Commission's recommendations, which build on the Commission's recommendations in its benchmarking planning inquiry ([Shop Talk 19/5/11](#)), strongly endorse the 'activity centres policies' approach to strategic planning. Its key point on planning is that "competition among retailers is most intense when they are geographically close" and this is the essence of activity centres planning policies. The Commission's specific recommendations address the removal of unnecessary planning restrictions, particularly to facilitate all retail formats being able to locate within activity centres. If implemented these recommendations will lead to greater, and fairer, competition and we support them.

We also support the Commission's conclusion that few significant improvements will flow to retailers from additional retail tenancy regulation and that trading hours should be completely deregulated. This does not mean that retailers will be forced to trade longer hours if they don't want to do so. The point is that retailers would be free to open when they feel it might be profitable to do so, not when governments tell them they can open. Sounds radical? Not to retailers in the USA or Asia – or, for that matter, retailers in the ACT, the NT and (ironically) northern Western Australia, which have had deregulated trading hours for decades.

COSTCO SAYS IT WON'T OPEN IN WA UNTIL SUNDAY TRADING LAWS ARE CHANGED

Further evidence that Perth residents will continue to pay higher prices for groceries because of the restrictions on Sunday trading comes with Costco's announcement that it won't seek to open in WA because of the State's "nanny State" trading hours laws (*West Australian 27/7/11*).

PROPERTY COUNCIL SHOPPING CENTRE MANAGEMENT ADVANCED COURSE

The Property Council is running a 3-day *Advanced Course in Shopping Centre Management and Marketing* in Sydney from 29 August. Register [here](#).

PROPERTY COUNCIL COURSES ON THE RETAIL LEASES ACT IN MELBOURNE

An [introduction course](#) to the Victorian *Retail Leases Act* will be held in Melbourne on 23 August and an [advanced course](#) on 13 September.

WESTFIELD HOST BREAKFAST SEMINARS AROUND AUSTRALIA FROM SEPTEMBER

Westfield is hosting a series of breakfast seminars and workshops on retail and related topics around Australia. Click [here](#) for further information, dates and to make a booking.

VICTORIA'S SMALL BUSINESS FESTIVAL DURING AUGUST IS WORTH A VISIT

The Victorian Government is hosting the [Small Business Festival](#) during August, including targeted workshops for retailers.

FOOD CONSULTANTS BRAIN & POULTER RELEASE NEWSLETTER ON FOOD COURTS

In its latest newsletter, food consultants, Brain & Poulter, research the question: *Is a Food Court a Destination?* Click [here](#) to view the newsletter.