



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS TO BEGIN REPORTING ONLINE RETAIL SALES

Federal Assistant Treasurer, David Bradbury, has [announced](#) funding to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to begin reporting Australian online retail spending. The Productivity Commission in the report last year of its inquiry into the retail industry recommended that "the ABS should monitor and report online expenditure both domestically and overseas by Australian consumers". Mr Bradbury said the first full data set on online retailing is expected to be published in November 2013. "Domestic online shopping figures will be reported on a monthly basis, as these will be collected as part of the existing ABS monthly retail trade survey." However "figures for online purchases of imported goods will be reported annually, based on data provided by the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and Australia Post". The ABS is also expected to produce a "snapshot" of online retail spending in early 2013.

ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON SUPERMARKET COMPETITION POLICY

The Shopping Centre Council on 19 July appeared before the [ACT Legislative Assembly's Select Committee on Supermarket Competition Policy](#) on the [submission](#) we had lodged. The amount of supermarket floorspace in the ACT doubled between 1992 and 2009 and Canberra now has more supermarket floorspace per capita than any other capital. Canberra also has a lesser proportion of supermarket floorspace owned by Coles and Woolworths. Incidentally this has occurred under the ACT's long-established 'centres' hierarchy and under the supposedly rigid Territory Plan. There is, therefore, no justification for the ACT Government maintaining its restrictive 2010 supermarket competition policy, which simply guarantees higher grocery prices for Canberrans.

INDEPENDENCE OF COMMENTATOR FRANK ZUMBO HAS NOW BEEN COMPROMISED

Associate Professor Frank Zumbo, as well as being a full-time academic at UNSW and a part-time Deputy Small Business Commissioner in South Australia, also finds time to be a commentator, often on shopping centre matters. In [The Punch](#) he recently gave his opinion on what shopping centres must do in order to compete with online retailers. He trivially dismissed more liberal trading hours for 'bricks and mortar' retailers as a case of going to a shopping centre "at 3am to do your shopping". It's odd that Frank did not use a more sensible example of liberalised trading hours such as, say, being able to visit a shopping centre on a public holiday or being able to shop at sensible hours on a Sunday. Of course, the South Australian Government does not allow most shopping centres to open on public holidays and limits Sunday trading to only 6 hours ([Shop Talk 28/6/12](#)). Frank, who usually urges tougher competition laws, could have drawn attention to this blatantly anti-competitive law and suggested this needs to be repealed if there is to be a more level playing field for all retailers. But that, of course, would have put him in conflict with the South Australian Government, his latest employer. Frank might be able to juggle being Deputy Small Business Commissioner in South Australia, while still fulfilling his university responsibilities in NSW. His obvious reluctance to come into conflict with the South Australian Government, however, severely compromises his independence as a commentator.

PROPERTY COUNCIL ANNUAL CONGRESS IN SYDNEY ON 31 OCTOBER-2 NOVEMBER

The Property Council's revamped Congress will be held in Sydney over three days from 31 October 2012. The Congress will also have a retail segment ('Spotlight') on the final day. Click [here](#) for further details and to book a place at the Congress.