



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Wednesday 16 April 2014

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PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION INQUIRY INTO RELATIVE COSTS IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

The Federal Government has announced an [inquiry](#) into the cost structures of businesses operating in the retail trade industry in Australia and, where relevant, identify areas of cost advantage and disadvantage for these businesses compared to international competitors. In announcing the inquiry, the Federal Treasurer, Joe Hockey, said a solid understanding of the cost structures of Australian businesses "can provide valuable insights for considering policies to support living standards and economic growth." The Productivity Commission has released an [Issues Paper](#) and is seeking submissions, which close on 2 May 2014. The Productivity Commission is due to report to the Treasurer by 7 October 2014.

WA ECONOMIC REGULATION AUTHORITY RECOMMENDS TRADING HOURS REFORM

The WA Economic Regulation Authority, which has been conducting an inquiry into microeconomic reform in the State, has [recommended](#) the effective deregulation of trading hours in WA. The ERA said shops should be allowed to trade at any time, and on any day, except Christmas Day, Good Friday and on the morning of Anzac Day. (These are the same trading arrangements which exist in Victoria and Tasmania). The ERA found "there is no market failure that justifies the restriction on competition: a fact that has been consistently supported by independent reviews of retail trading hours". Further, the ERA noted that the "regulation of retail trading hours disadvantages 'bricks and mortar' shops relative to on-line retailers, who are free to trade whenever they wish." If the WA Government acts on this recommendation, this would not be a radical move since trading hours in the vast area of WA above the 26th parallel (including the major centres of Broome, Port Headland and Karratha) have never had any legislative restrictions on trading hours.

WANT TO BE A CENTRE MANAGER? LEARN HOW TO RUN A REAL ESTATE AGENCY!

An experienced and highly-regarded centre manager was recently advised by a state regulatory authority that she could not continue in her job unless she obtained a real estate agents' license. The centre manager had once held a license but, during a brief period out of the industry, had let the license lapse. Her employer (which is actually a related entity to the shopping centre owner) holds her in very high regard; she has worked in the industry for more than a decade at several shopping centres; and has undertaken education courses in shopping centre management. All this counts for nought, however: she now has to go off and get a real estate agents' license which will teach her how to sell, lease and manage residential property and how to work in a real estate agency. Unfortunately, unlike the course mentioned in the last item below, the real estate agents' license will teach her absolutely nothing about how to manage or to lease a shopping centre! This is currently the law in all states and territories around Australia. Fortunately two State Governments have now seen the light and are moving to remove this senseless piece of regulation ([Shop Talk 30/1/14](#) & [21/11/13](#)).

ISSUES PAPER FOR THE REVIEW OF COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY

The Panel conducting the review of competition law and policy has now released the [Issues Paper](#) for the review ([Shop Talk 3/4/14](#)). Submissions to the review will close on 10 June 2014.

PCA RETAIL PROPERTY ADVANCED COURSE IN BRISBANE FROM 6 MAY 2014

The Property Council Academy is running a three-day advanced course in Retail Property, in Brisbane from 6 May. Participants need to have completed a [Retail Property Introduction course](#). Click [here](#) for further details and register [here](#).