



# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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## NEW QLD INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND CHARGES REGIME COMMENCES

The Queensland Government's [new infrastructure planning and charges framework](#) commenced last week, following an extensive consultation process including the passage of new legislation through Parliament ([Shop Talk 14/11/13](#)). A copy of our joint submission on the Bill, with the Property Council of Australia, is available [here](#). Key improvements include the process for developing and reviewing infrastructure plans and appeal rights relating to infrastructure conditions. There is no change to the current 'capped' charges however the Government has introduced a schedule of 'fair value' charges, which are lower (15% lower for retail development) than the capped charges. A council will be eligible for the Government to 'co-invest' in catalyst infrastructure if they adopt these lower charges.

## COSBOA IS NO LONGER A SIGNIFICANT FORCE IN SMALL BUSINESS POLICY

Some years ago the Council of Small Business Organisations appeared to be on track to achieve its ambition to be the true voice of small businesses in Australia. COSBOA was then damaged by some poor appointments; prominent resignations in protest at sloppy governance; and a tactical mistake in allowing itself to be used by the former Federal Government. Just how far COSBOA has fallen is revealed in its 'submission' to the Competition Policy Review. The document contains scant evidence and is little more than a mindless, stream of consciousness rant at "the duopoly", "the big end of town", "highly skilled lobbyists" and "business parasites". The last, of course, is a reference to landlords and it is little wonder that the responsible retailer associations have nothing to do with COSBOA and resent it wading into retail tenancy matters ([Shop Talk 20/6/13](#)). Australia needs a small business equivalent of the BCA. Sadly, on present form, COSBOA will never be that body.

## NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS BEING CONSIDERED

The NSW Government is currently considering the [Independent Local Government Review Panel's](#) final report into local government reform ([Shop Talk 4/7/13](#)). The Shopping Centre Council has made a submission on the final report. Our submission draws attention to the report's incomplete analysis, and the failure to consider clear evidence, in relation to the lack of fairness for rating and taxation of shopping centres. The current system enables councils to gouge commercial properties through differential rates. In an absurd proposal, the Panel has recommended a partial shift from unimproved land value to capital improved value for residential apartments. This highlights a potential double standard. While local councils could apply differential rates to apartments (as they do for commercial properties), they are obviously cautious about doing so because this would mean taking on disgruntled residents (and voters). They are obviously less cautious when dealing with commercial property owners given the poor state of electoral accountability to commercial businesses.

## ICSC RECON ASIA AND SHOPPING CENTER AWARDS IN SINGAPORE, 10-12 NOVEMBER

The International Council of Shopping Centers' *RECon Asia* will be held in Singapore from 10-12 November. Click [here](#) for the program; [here](#) to register; and [here](#) for hotel bookings. The Asia Pacific Shopping Center Awards will be presented during *RECon Asia* on 11 November. Click [here](#) to submit your entry. Entries close on 7 August.

## EDUCATIONAL COURSE ON VICTORIAN RETAIL LEASES ACT IN SEPTEMBER

The Property Council Victoria will run a half-day course on the Victorian *Retail Leases Act* in Melbourne on 16 September. Click [here](#) for details; and to register [here](#).