



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT TRADING HOURS REFORMS IN PERTH

It is now two years since Sunday trading and public holiday trading were allowed for large shops throughout Perth ([Shop Talk 23/8/12](#)). As a result shopping centres have been able to open throughout Perth on these days as well. The anniversary was greeted by a report by the Independent Grocers Association, a long-time opponent of extended trading hours in Perth, claiming that extended hours has had little impact on the number of small retailers opening their doors. The report, among other things, claims that 90% of independent retailers "have seen no additional business benefit" and that "Sunday trading has done nothing for consumer choice". What are the real outcomes? A recent survey by the Shopping Centre Council of major shopping centres in Perth, which has been provided to the Government, found the take up rate by specialty shops now ranges from 80%-100%. In our experience this is a faster take up rate than occurred in both Brisbane and Adelaide when Sunday trading was introduced over a decade ago. In the surveyed shopping centres this translates into an estimated 1,400 extra specialty retailers now opening their doors on Sunday. What was that about Sunday trading doing nothing for consumer choice? Given that under retail tenancy legislation in WA, small retailers can't be forced to open on Sundays (or on public holidays), this is a phenomenal result. The IGA also claims weekly sales have decreased or remained the same. Again this isn't true. Our members have reported weekly sales increases ranging from 5% to 14% across their centres. The IGA, like many bodies that benefit from government regulation, makes the mistake of assuming that trading hours regulation exists for the benefit of its members. That's not the case. As the WA Economic Regulation Authority recently stated: "Consumer choice, rather than arbitrary government regulation, should determine which shops open and when" ([Shop Talk 31/7/14](#)).

QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS ON NATIONAL ENERGY LAW

The Queensland Parliamentary Committee on State Development, Infrastructure and Industry has released its [report](#) on the *National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Bill*. The objective of the Bill is to transition Queensland into the National Energy Customer Framework, which will see the regulation of embedded electricity networks, currently covered by Queensland laws, move to a national framework administered by the Australian Energy Regulator. This will increase harmonisation. The Shopping Centre Council made a [submission](#) to the Committee.

COST OF REAL ESTATE LICENSING FOR INDIVIDUAL CENTRE MANAGERS

We've previously highlighted the cost of unnecessary real estate agents licensing on commercial property companies ([Shop Talk 18/10/12](#)). We shouldn't overlook the cost to individuals as well. We received an email from a shopping centre manager in South Australia, who has worked successfully as a centre manager for many years, and who had previously held a real estate agents licence and was registered in SA: "I've completed certificate IV courses in real estate as well as the Diploma of Property, however I'm unable to gain a real estate agents licence due to the courses having been updated and new modules being added. I am therefore required to spend an additional \$2,000 of my own money to update my training (in areas of real estate that are of absolutely no benefit to me as a shopping centre manager)". This is *Alison in Wonderland* stuff – spending \$2,000 to gain a qualification that teaches you absolutely nothing about how to do the job you have successfully done for many years! This absurd law will soon be abolished in Queensland. Hopefully that will embolden other State Governments to rebuff the vested interests maintaining this law in other States ([Shop Talk 8/5/14](#) & [21/11/13](#)).