



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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NSW GOVERNMENT INTRODUCES FLEXIBILITY FOR CHRISTMAS TRADING

In a welcome move, the NSW Government has introduced trading hour flexibility for the busy pre-Christmas period, allowing 24 hour trade across the state without the need for approval. This flexibility, which is granted subject to certain conditions, including zoning, is restricted to a two week period starting 11 December (today). The relevant changes to the [Exempt and Complying Development Code SEPP](#) were introduced in February after a protracted period of consultation and delay dating as far back as 2011. These changes do not override a centre's core trading hour arrangements or Christmas trading hour arrangements which may have already agreed with retailers, and announced. It remains up to individual centres to work with their retailers to determine the opening hours that best suit customer demand for the pre-Christmas period.

SA PREMIER ANNOUNCES TAX REVIEW TO IMPROVE COMPETITIVENESS

The South Australian Premier, Jay Weatherill, has announced a review of the tax system as part of an [Economic Priorities Statement](#), with an intention to produce a Green Paper for discussion early next year. This is a welcome move which provides an opportunity to raise a number of taxes, such as land tax and the Emergency Services Levy, and their interaction with the statutory land valuation system. SA is a high taxing state, including for shopping centres. It has, for instance, the highest land tax and overall statutory charges on a per square metre basis for neighbourhood shopping centres when compared to other jurisdictions. For larger shopping centres, SA's charges are second only to West Australia. The recent 20% increase to the Emergency Services Levy, which formed part of the 2014-15 State Budget announced in June, will only make the current situation worse. The Shopping Centre Council will be engaging with this review.

BRISBANE PARKING TASKFORCE REPORT RELEASED

[Brisbane City Council's Parking Taskforce](#), chaired by the Deputy Mayor and Chairman of Council's Infrastructure Committee, Councillor Adrian Schrunner, has released their [final report](#) on the review of Council's parking policies and practices ([Shop Talk 31/7/14](#)). Based on the Taskforce's initial list of considerations, which referenced the "operation of private commercial car parks" and their impact on broader parking behaviors, the Shopping Centre Council lodged a submission to ensure that shopping centre car parking issues, including managed, paid and commuter parking, were properly analysed and considered. This included the interaction with public transport facilities. The final report, which makes 55 recommendations, notes that "parking on private property (including shopping centres and new developments)" was excluded from the scope of the Taskforce's considerations. The final report, while noting the parking pressures in the CBD and major activity centres (where shopping centre are located), therefore does not make any recommendations or interventions in relation to shopping centre car parks. This is a pleasing development. The Taskforce will be convened again in three months and six months' time, and will then be convened on an annual basis.

PROPERTY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA RETAIL OUTLOOK 2015 IN SYDNEY

The Property Council's NSW Division will hold its annual *Retail Outlook 2015* on 11 February in Sydney. HSBC Chief Economist Australia and New Zealand, Paul Bloxham, returns to provide his perspective on economic data, trends and the overall outlook for retail property. A panel of industry experts will then discuss the critical issues and opportunities facing the retail property sector. Click [here](#) to register.