



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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WA COMMITS TO FURTHER TRADING HOURS REFORM: HARDWARE A FOCUS

In a welcome move, the WA Premier, Colin Barnett, announced recently in a [Parliamentary Statement](#) on legislation and policy priorities for 2015, that his Government will build on the progress of current reforms and address "anomalies in trading hours regulation" (part of WA's 'incremental' approach to trading hours reform). Both the Premier and the Minister for Commerce, Michael Mischin, have since clarified publicly that the Government does not intend to alter the current 11am-5pm Sunday trading hours arrangements in the Perth Metropolitan area. But the Government has clarified that a key focus is addressing anomalies in the hardware sector. The *Retail Trading Hours Regulations 1998* prescribes, for instance, what can be sold for a shop to be designated as a 'Domestic Development Shop' and, therefore, trade as a 'Special Retail Shop' between the hours of 6am-11:30am every day. The impact of this definition means that, for instance, Masters is unable to trade as this type of shop, or with the same hours as its competitor Bunnings. Only when you read the Regulation - which provides, for example, that an "indoor television antennae" can be sold but (by implication) an external television antennae cannot be sold - does one understand the ridiculous and absurd nature of regulation that has not kept pace with the times. In addition to the hardware anomalies, the reforms could also provide an opportunity for more flexibility in relation to weekday and Saturday trading hours. There is no stated commitment in relation to when the proposed changes will be drafted or introduced, but we expect that this will occur around the middle of the year. As the Economic Regulation Authority Western Australia stated in its microeconomic reform report: "consumer choice, rather than Government regulation, should determine when shops open and when" (*Shop Talk*, [31/7/14](#)). Premier Barnett should be applauded for taking this next step in the reform process.

PRIME MINISTER ISSUES NATIONAL SECURITY STATEMENT

This week the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, issued a [National Security Statement](#) which provided an update of the nature of Australia's terrorism threat and a range of proposed new counter-terrorism measures, as recommended by a government [Review of Australia's Counter-Terrorism Machinery](#) commissioned last August. The Prime Minister stated that "the terrorist threat is rising at home and abroad - and it's becoming harder to combat" and "by any measure, the threat to Australia is worsening". This week's statement provided an update to the statement made on [22 September 2014](#), which came shortly after the national terrorism public alert level was [raised from medium to high](#). Part of the proposed new measures include changing the current national terror alert system and appointing a National Counter-Terrorism coordinator.

EASTER AND ANZAC DAY TRADING HOURS AROUND AUSTRALIA

The National Retail Association has produced this comprehensive [Guide](#) to public holiday and trading day information around Australia over the Easter period and the Anzac Day weekend. Since the Guide was produced the Victorian Government has announced that Easter Sunday will be a public holiday in that State (*Shop Talk* [19/2/15](#)).

ICSC CHINA RETAIL SUMMIT AND CONNECTIONS IN SHANGHAI IN APRIL

The International Council of Shopping Centers is holding a new [event](#) in Shanghai on 28-29 April 2015. This event, which will be held on an annual basis, will offer the opportunity for deal-making and business introductions for owners, developers, investors and international retailers. There will also be a separate session providing information about the market in China. Further information and booking details are [here](#).