



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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NEW SAFETY MEASURES ADOPTED IN WA FOLLOWING EXPLOSION AT CENTRE

WA Energy Safety has issued an [Order](#) affecting electrical installations incorporating oil-insulated high voltage (HV) combined-fuse switches. The Order specifies actions that must be taken in relation to such switches. This follows an investigation into the causes of an explosion at Galleria Shopping Centre ([Shop Talk 19/2/15](#)).

FEEDBACK ON PERTH'S EXTENDED HOLIDAY PERIOD TRADING HOURS

Feedback has been provided to the WA Government on the take-up of the extended trading hours over the holiday season ([Shop Talk 6/11/14](#)). Starting 5 December last year, this included the flexibility of 7am openings Monday to Saturday, 6pm closures on Saturdays, and 8am to 6pm opening hours on Sundays pre and immediately after Christmas, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and Australia Day. Data collected from a number of centres revealed that the extended trading hours were embraced by shoppers, retailers and shopping centres and were as a success. Specifically, customer foot traffic and retailer participation increased over time in the pre-Christmas period, presumably as customers become aware they had the choice to shop at these times and as Christmas drew closer. Retailer participation on Sundays and Boxing Day was also particularly high in certain centres. This uptake is particularly telling in light of the fact that retailers could not be 'forced' to trade during the extended hours. The feedback to Government also revealed that shopping trends across Perth are not homogenous and that, with the addition of greater flexibility, retailers exercise discretion as to their opening hours in line with the needs of their customers. This feedback was provided in the wake of the Government recently committing to further reform of trading hours ([Shop Talk 26/02/14](#)).

RETAIL LEASE DISPUTES ARE ON THE DECLINE IN VICTORIA

We are a bit late in reporting on this but the [2013-14 Annual Report](#) of the Victorian Small Business Commissioner notes retail tenancy disputes fell by nearly 8% last year and "there has been a declining trend since the commencement of 2012". Last year 424 mediations of retail tenancy disputes were completed and nearly 78% of these were successful. The report further notes that nearly 27% of all disputes (i.e. not just retail tenancy disputes) were resolved without needing to go to mediation. The 1,017 applications to the SBC in 2013-14 – not all of which were actual disputes – sounds a lot but represents only 1.4% of all retail leases on foot in Victoria. Some like to talk up the number of retail tenancy disputes but these are actually rare and usually successfully resolved.

MOORABBIN AIRPORT DECISION UPHELD BY ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TRIBUNAL

The ADT has [upheld](#) a decision by then Minister for Transport, Anthony Albanese, to refuse a draft Major Development Plan (MDP) which would have seen an approx. 14,500m² Westfarmers anchored retail precinct delivered at Moorabbin Airport. In refusing to overturn the decision, Justice Guard stated "that the tribunal could not be satisfied about the likely effect of the proposed development on the local and regional economy and community, especially the economic impacts on other retail centres and facilities in those communities". This is a sensible and hard fought outcome.

NSW/ACT SHOPPING CENTRE DIRECTORY NOW AVAILABLE

The NSW/ACT Shopping Centre Directory for 2015, with detailed information on individual shopping centres, is now available. Orders can be made via the Property Council's [Bookshop](#) page.