



# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Thursday 23 April 2015

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## WA PREMIER FLAGS SUNDAY TRADING HOURS CHANGES IN THE NEXT TERM

Western Australian Premier, Colin Barnett, has flagged proposed changes to regulated Sunday trading hours if re-elected in 2017. Mr Barnett has been quoted that, if re-elected, "we may well extend Sunday shopping" and this would be for "an hour or two". He ruled out taking any action prior to the election, in March 2017, saying he intended to keep his election commitment not to change trading hours in this term. At present large shops cannot trade before 11am or after 5pm. However events may overtake Mr Barnett's pledge not to make changes in this term. There is presently a groundswell of support within Mr Barnett's parliamentary party to extend Sunday trading hours, based on feedback from small retailers. Mr Barnett is also under increasing pressure to speed up micro-economic reforms in return for additional federal financial assistance to compensate for the projected fall in WA's share of the national allocation of GST revenue. It is not clear where Mr Barnett's pledge not to make changes in this term leaves solution of the 'hardware anomaly', whereby Bunnings is able to trade longer hours on Sundays (but not able to sell certain items it is free to sell on other days) but its direct competitor, Masters, can only trade for six hours on Sundays.

## RECORD UNITED STATES SHOPPING CENTRE OCCUPANCY RATES IN 2014

Good news out of the United States, with data showing US shopping centre occupancy rates have rebounded substantially. According to [International Council of Shopping Centers \(ICSC\) data](#), the average occupancy rate for enclosed shopping centres was 94.2%, a level not achieved since 1987. The average occupancy rate for open-air shopping centres was 92.7%, the highest level since 2008, just before the GFC. The data also showed a significant rebound in rents and sales productivity.

## SA GOVERNMENT REVIEWING ACTIVITY CENTRES AND USES

The South Australian Government is in the process of reviewing its activity centres framework, and is considering preparing a number of Development Plan amendments which would potentially affect retail development across Greater Adelaide (excluding the City of Adelaide). We have encouraged the Government to take this opportunity to identify pathways to facilitate retail investment in the right locations across South Australia, namely activity centres, to see the continued growth of vibrant mixed-use precincts and the maximization of infrastructure investment. We have advised Government that, in our view, its current thinking does not go far enough to address the needs of whole of South Australia's retail economy, including shopping centres, as the review's scope is too heavily focussed on the needs of "new retailers". We have encouraged the Government to consider removing barriers to investment in activity centres, including greater use of 'As of Right' development and the removal of floorspace and tenancy area controls in activity centre zones. The review is in its early stages and there is no timeframe for completion.

## AUSTRALIAN RETAIL AWARDS 2015

The 2015 Australian Retail Awards are now open with entries closing on Friday 8 May. Winners will be announced at a Breakfast ceremony on Thursday 2 July in Melbourne. For more information and to enter please visit the ARA website [here](#).

## SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE DIRECTORY NOW AVAILABLE

The SA 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.