



# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE  
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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## SHOPPING CENTRES AND RETAILERS PARTNER ON TAX SUBMISSION

The Shopping Centre Council has partnered with the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) to lodge a [joint submission](#) in response to the Federal Government's [Re:Think Tax Discussion Paper \(Shop Talk 1/4/15\)](#). The joint submission demonstrates that the retail and shopping centre sectors are important consumer facing sectors which deserve a seat at the reform discussion table. The submission canvasses a range of issues on which there is common ground between owners and tenants, including land tax and valuation, and the GST (including the Low Value Threshold). The submission urges the Government and other stakeholders to progress reform cautiously for fear of the adoption of oversimplified reform options which are informed by an unsophisticated view of so-called 'tax efficiency'. History has proven that governments can ignore 'tax efficiency' when it comes to the commercial property sector. By way of example, the submission reflects on the shift of the Emergency Services Levy from insurance to property in Victoria which led to disproportional impacts on shopping centres, despite their relatively low fire risk. The submission also expresses concern regarding calls to abolish stamp duty. We note that a corresponding introduction of a broad based land tax could still leave commercial property exposed to volatility in land valuation processes and the potential for ongoing incremental increases to land tax rates. On the GST, we have recommended that the integrity of the GST's base should be addressed first, including through the proposed 'Netflix Tax' and addressing the LVT. The submission notes that broadening the base of the GST to include currently exempt items is the preferred reform option. A Green Paper outlining possible reform options is expected before the end of year, prior to the release of the White Paper which will inform the Government's tax policy in the lead up to the next federal election.

## VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT TIGHTENS PET SHOP RECORD-KEEPING REGULATIONS

The [Domestic Animals Amendment Regulation 2015](#), which tightens record keeping by pet shops in Victoria, came into effect on 1 July 2015. The regulations outline the detailed information a pet shop is required to keep and maintain in relation to all dogs and cats that are offered for sale or sold. The information includes where the animal was sourced from, which includes documentation which verifies the identity of the person or business that supplied the animal and their contact details. These changes form part of a 'puppy farm crackdown', and the Victorian Minister for Agriculture, Jaala Pulford MLC, [announced](#) that this new approach will also enable authorised officers, including those from the RSPCA, to determine the source of animals being sold in pet shops as well as identify illegal breeders. Information kept and maintained by pet shops must also be made available for inspection by any authorised officer upon request.

## ACCC EXAMINING COLES' PROPOSED PURCHASE OF SUPABARN SUPERMARKETS

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is investigating the proposed acquisition by Coles of nine Supabarn supermarkets in the ACT and NSW. Section 50 of the *Competition and Consumer Act* prohibits acquisitions that substantially lessen competition in a market or are likely to do so. Further details of the supermarkets, and the impacted trade areas, are available [here](#). Submissions close on 20 July.

## DON'T FORGET: ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN IN SCCA MARKETING AWARDS

Entries are now open in the 2015 Shopping Centre Council of Australia Marketing Awards. Further details and entry forms are available [here](#). Entries close on 7 August 2015.