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MEDIA RELEASE

RETAIL SALES UP 3.3% IN SEPTEMBER 2026 QUARTER – DEPARTMENT STORE EVOLUTION CONTINUES

- *Retail sales* at Australia's shopping centres grew 3.3% in the September quarter (July-September 2026) compared with the same period last year, led by specialty retailers (up 3.8%). Major tenants, including supermarkets, department stores and discount department stores, recorded sales growth of 2.0%.
- WA led the nation with 5.9% growth, followed by SA (3.9%), with ACT recording the lowest growth (2.2%).
- *Customer foot traffic* at shopping centres increased by 2.6% nationally, outpacing population growth of 1.4%, and up from the foot traffic increase of 2% for the 2025/2026 FY period.
- *Retail leasing demand* remains strong, with leasing deals led by food catering (21.2%) (e.g. cafes), apparel (21.1%) (e.g. women's and men's clothing) and retail services (17.5%) (e.g. hairdressing).

Today's release of the second edition of the Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA) and Urbis ***Retail Insights*** report **(attached)**, based on direct SCCA member data, highlights the strength of the shopping centre market across the key metrics of retail sales, customer foot traffic, occupancy rates and retail leasing demand.

This second edition of *Retail Insights* covers the September 2026 quarter (July-September 2026), following the inaugural edition (attached) which covered the 2025/2026 FY period.

Today's release also builds on the inaugural edition of *Retail Insights* by providing further insights on the evolution of Department stores within shopping centres, including the structural consolidation that has been replaced with emerging categories.

Across the twenty-year period between 2006-2026, today's release outlines the categories that experienced major growth in retail floorspace as follows:

- *Food and beverage* – 165% retail floorspace growth.
- *Mini-majors* – 64% retail floorspace growth (e.g. JB Hi-Fi, Uniqlo, Mecca).
- *Entertainment* – 53% retail floorspace growth (e.g. bowling, cinemas, competitive socialising).

For the period between 2016-2026, the category of *Health, beauty and wellbeing* grew 64%.

Data analysis drawn from the *2026 Urbis Shopping Centre Benchmarks* shows that department stores' share of total retail floorspace has declined from 24% in 2006 to 15% in 2026; with their share of shopping centre retail sales falling from 14.4% to 5.9% over the same period.

Angus Nardi, Chief Executive of the SCCA said: "The latest *SCCA/Urbis Retail Insights* paints a healthy picture, backed by the industry's direct data and evidence, on the continued strength and evolution of Australia's shopping centres."

"Our latest data also reinforces the important role our industry plays in the economy and community, with strong customer foot traffic growth, and incredibly productive retail spaces that provide a backbone to strong retail sales and employment."

Ian Shimmin, Director, Urbis said: "Our latest edition of *Retail Insights* highlights that across every key metric, Australia's shopping centres continue to be resilient, productive and evolving. Retail sales are up, foot traffic outperformed population growth, and retail leasing activity is signalling solid demand for bricks and mortar space in managed centres."

"Twenty years of industry data show how the role of department stores has shifted. Their share of regional centre floorspace has dropped from 24% in 2006 to 15% today, and their share of total centre sales has fallen by a similar margin. As large-format and specialist retailers grow and centres take on broader roles, department stores – with some exceptions – are no longer the foot traffic drivers or 'anchor' tenants they once were."

"Repurposing vacated or consolidated space gives shopping centres a major opportunity to improve value for customers and their customer experience, create more retail jobs, and lift overall productivity."

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The latest SCCA/Urbis Retail Insights report is attached and will be publicly available for access and download on the SCCA (scca.org.au) and Urbis websites (urbis.com.au).

The Retail Insights report covers the key metrics of retail sales / spending, customer foot traffic, retail leasing deals and occupancy rates to provide a consumer and economic snapshot of activity across Australia's shopping centres; and with quarterly public reporting to enable a transparent and strategic view.

The key foundations of the Retail Insights report are as follows:

- *The use of SCCA member and industry data to enable a direct, timely and real-world snapshot.*
- *Coverage of a range of metrics beyond retail sales (e.g. customer foot traffic, occupancy rates, retail leasing deals) to provide a broader consumer and economic snapshot.*
- *SCCA member and industry data is analysed independently by Urbis, who have deep industry experience and expertise alongside longstanding research products such as the Shopping Centre Benchmarks (first produced in 1992) and the SCCA/Urbis Statutory Charges Database which comprises industry valuation and taxation data.*

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