



SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

SHOPPING CENTRE
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Friday 25 June 2010

[Archive](#)

WA... SILLY, ONE DAY; SILLIER THE NEXT!

The so-called political compromise between the Labor and Liberal parties in WA over trading hours in Perth is an absurd farce. Under the 'compromise', Sunday trading will be permitted for 'durable consumer goods' throughout Perth. No-one from the Government or the Opposition can explain what will be a 'durable consumer good' for the purpose of the legislation, other than the fact that it includes 'white goods'. Apparently, though, it will permit, say, Harvey Norman stores to open but not, say, Big W or K-mart stores, despite the fact that they are competitors in many retail lines and just about the entire retail offer in a discount department store would be considered 'durable consumer goods'.

Laughingly, the Leader of the Opposition, Eric Ripper, has defended the agreement on the grounds that it will "prevent further inconsistencies and anomalies which are not fair on groups of consumers or small business operators". He also claimed that Labor had "sought to negotiate a comprehensive solution to avoid frequent piecemeal and discriminatory changes to trading hours." Instead of the present discriminatory laws, which are justified on the grounds that they benefit (mainly) 'small' shops at the expense of (mainly) 'big' stores, WA will now also have laws which discriminate in favour of some 'big' stores and against other 'big' stores. How can such an unfair law be justified, let alone portrayed as preventing "further inconsistencies and anomalies"?

At least common sense prevailed when Labor did not pursue its earlier threat to join with the Greens to disallow a regulation expanding the boundaries of Perth and Fremantle CBDs for trading hours purposes, and also permitting extended trading hours in this expanded area. Labor has earlier said it would subsequently support legislation to permit this to occur. In the intervening months, many shop employees would have lost their jobs, or had their income reduced, with no guarantee those jobs would return.

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL INCREASE IN INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGE UNITS

Brisbane City Council has advised that the value of its infrastructure charges unit will increase by 2.5% from 1 July 2010. Existing development approvals must be paid in accordance with the prevailing value of a unit at the time of payment so the Council is recommending payment of outstanding infrastructure contributions before the end of this financial year. From 1 July 2010 responsibility for the setting of rates for water and sewerage infrastructure charges will rest with the new Queensland Urban Utilities.

DEATH OF JOHN MARTIN FORMER ACCC SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER

John Martin, former Commissioner of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission with responsibility for small business, died suddenly in Canberra last Saturday. Mr Martin's term on the ACCC concluded last year and he subsequently conducted the special inquiry into the ACT grocery market. John was widely respected by all who dealt with him and our sympathies go to his family.

QIC WINS NATIONAL PROPERTY AWARD FOR ROBINA TOWN CENTRE

Congratulations to the team at QIC for winning the Award for Shopping Centres, for the Robina Town Centre Northern Malls Redevelopment, at the 2010 Property Council of Australia / Rider Levett Bucknall Awards. The full list of winners is available [here](#).

PCA ACT HOSTS PROPERTY AND LEASING FUNDAMENTALS COURSE

The Property Council ACT is conducting a Property and Leasing Fundamentals Course in Canberra on 1 July. Further details and registrations are [here](#).