

December 5, 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

1.5 million people can't be wrong: retailers and landlords anticipating another bumper Boxing Day in NSW

Retailers and major shopping centre owners are anticipating another bumper Boxing Day in 2016 if the success of widespread trading in 2015 is anything to go by.

2016 is only the second year where widespread trading has been allowed on Boxing Day. This follows the New South Wales Parliament legislating a two-year trial in 2015.

The Executive Director of the Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA), Mr Angus Nardi, said that widespread trading was a long overdue opportunity for retailers and customers alike.

"2015 was a great success. Based on a data sample provided directly by our members, close to 1.5 million Sydney-siders visited a shopping centre on Boxing Day in 2015.

"This means that nearly one third of Sydney's population enjoyed the benefit of the more relaxed approach to Boxing Day trading.

Mr Nardi also noted that Boxing Day 2015 was the fourth most popular trading day for customers over the Christmas period and that Boxing Day foot-traffic was over 25% higher than the average traffic over the Christmas period.

"The figures speak for themselves.

"Customers want to enjoy the Boxing Day sales on Boxing Day, and they should be able to that at a location close to home.

"We have reminded our members about their obligations on Boxing Day, specifically that they can't force retailers to trade.

The Chief Executive Officer of the National Retail Association (NRA), Ms Dominique Lamb, said retail had steadily picked up after a slow start, due in large part to the federal election.

"We've seen strong, positive momentum over the second half of the year, with New South Wales consumers on track to spend around \$15 billion in the lead up to Christmas through to the Boxing Day sales.

"2016 is the second in a two-year trial period, and we expect consumers to again embrace the more relaxed trading hours and locations for Boxing Day, which is a critical day for retailers," Ms Lamb said.

Both the SCCA and NRA will be monitoring Boxing Day trading in 2016 so they can provide positive input to the review of the liberalised trading regime in 2017.

"Retailers, landlords and, most importantly, consumers, have really embraced the trial period, so we will do all we can to work with the Government to ensure widespread trading on Boxing Day is retained on a more permanent basis from 2017," Ms Lamb said.

[ENDS]

The National Retail Association is Australia's largest and most diverse retail industry organisation, and has been representing the interests of the retail, fast food and broader service sector for almost 100 years.

The Shopping Centre Council of Australia is the national industry and advocacy group for Australia's major shopping centre owners, managers and developers.

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