

# SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2018

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## WA PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE LAUNCHES INQUIRY INTO TERRORISM IN CROWDED PLACES

The Western Australian Parliament's Community Development and Justice Standing Committee has launched an [inquiry](#) into the protection of crowded places from terrorist acts. Shopping centres are deemed as 'crowded places', along with stadiums, pedestrian malls and major events, under the [national strategy](#) launched by the Prime Minister last year ([Shop Talk 25/8/17](#)). The Committee will inquire into issues such as the relationship between owners of crowded places and government agencies, police response capability, and security licensing and registration. Submissions are due in late March.

## QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TO FIX OVERSIGHT IN RECENT TRADING HOUR CHANGES

The Queensland Government has committed to resolving an oversight in recent trading hour legislative changes ([Shop Talk 25/8/17](#)) which would have seen large retailers close for the four days of the Easter long weekend in some regional towns. Prior to the oversight, large retailers in towns such as Ayr and Kingaroy would have been able to trade on Easter Saturday, even though it was a public holiday. The Minister for Industrial Relations, Grace Grace, is reported as describing the situation as an "unintentional drafting omission" and has committed to resolving the issue before Easter (30 March to 2 April in 2018). The Queensland Parliament resumed this week, and proposed amendments have been [tabled](#).

## MEDIA COMMENT ABOUT RETAILER EXITS NOT RELATED TO RETAIL LEASING LEGISLATION

Media coverage this week alluded to "looming legislative changes" which would increase the ease with which retailers could "exit from problematic individual stores". This statement does not relate to any proposed change to any piece retail leasing legislation or to the *Competition and Consumer Act*, but to proposed changes to the *Corporations Act* with regard to insolvent trading and the enforceability of certain clauses in certain circumstances. These amendments are not specific to the retail sector or to leases.

## DISPELLING A MYTH: SHOPPING CENTRE FOOT TRAFFIC IS NOT IN DECLINE

We've seen a recent media article, along with a separate claim put to us, that shopping centre foot traffic is in decline. No nuance; it was presented as fact. This claim was then contextualised as a key reason that shopping centre owners should be, in effect, working more with their retailers (as if they don't in any case). The problem is, this claim is complete nonsense. From our own investigations, this claim seems to stem from a retail-industry measure of foot traffic that tracks customers in specific stores; as opposed those entering a shopping centre. We also understand that most of the stores in this sample include discretionary retailers that are currently experiencing difficult trading conditions, including a decline in customers. On the flip side, our own recent data analysis highlights that foot traffic in shopping centres, for a 'stable' sample of centres (i.e. centres that have reported foot traffic numbers every year during the analysis period), has increased by 10.5 per cent in the last decade, and by 1.6 per cent in 2017 alone. In addition, moving annual turnover (i.e. overall retail sales) across these centres has outgrown the increase in foot traffic; as has the average spend per customer. Such claims about a decline of shopping centre foot traffic (along with other such claims we see from time to time) clearly have to be taken with a grain of salt. Misunderstood or misrepresented data can be a major source of frustration for our industry; it also does not provide a platform for productive engagement on key industry issues.

## SAVE THE DATE: 2018 SCCA MARKETING AWARDS GALA DINNER ANNOUNCED

The Shopping Centre Council is pleased to announce that this year's SCCA Marketing Awards Gala Dinner will be held on Wednesday 17 October 2018 at Doltone House, Jones Bay Wharf, Sydney. Nominations will open on 1 July 2018 and close on Monday 6 August 2018. More information on the nomination process, including the Call for Entries Booklet, will be released shortly via the Awards [website](#).

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