

SHOP TALK

ISSUES AND NEWS AFFECTING THE AUSTRALIAN SHOPPING CENTRE INDUSTRY

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NSW MODERN SLAVERY BILL PASSES LOWER HOUSE: WEEKS AFTER NATIONAL COMMITMENT

Just weeks after a Federal [commitment](#) the NSW lower house this week passed the [Modern Slavery Bill 2018](#). Among other things, the Bill introduced to Parliament by Christian Democrat Member Paul Green, seeks to introduce an Anti-Slavery Commissioner for NSW. Public reporting requirements regarding business supply chains are proposed to apply to entities with an annual turnover of more than \$50 million. In contrast, the national Modern Slavery Act proposes reporting requirements for businesses with annual consolidated revenue greater than \$100 million. NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian stated in Parliament that the Government wants to deliver a solution that "harmonises with the Federal approach currently being developed and does not duplicate administrative burdens unnecessarily". How this will be achieved will become clearer once relevant legislation is tabled in Federal Parliament.

SMALL BUSINESS OMBUDSMAN ANNOUNCES INQUIRY INTO BUSINESS-RELATED DISPUTES

The Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman (ASBFEO) is seeking feedback to better understand business-related disputes, and the steps taken to resolve them. This follows the announcement in December 2017 that the ASBFEO would be undertaking an inquiry into access to justice for small businesses ([ShopTalk 8/12/2017](#)). This phase of the inquiry aims to, among other things, understand why a dispute is, or isn't, pursued, and the nature and incidence of small business disputes. In a related [media statement](#), the ASBFEO, Kate Carnell AO, stated, "we are hoping to hear from small business owners who might have found an unfair contract term in a contract or who had an invoice paid late; we want to know what steps you took to resolve the issue". Ms Carnell also notes that "...anything we can do to improve access to justice for small businesses is extremely important". Survey responses are being welcomed until the end of June, following which a Discussion Paper will be released which will summarise the inquiry's research and propose policy responses.

LATEST ABS RETAIL TRADE FIGURES: STRONG GROWTH M-O-M, WEAKER Y-O-Y

The latest release (April 2018) of the monthly ABS Retail Trade data indicates that the month-on-month (m-o-m) trend estimate increased by 0.3 per cent, and that Retail Turnover increased by 2.6 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y). In seasonally adjusted terms, Retail Turnover increased by 0.4 per cent, up from a "relatively unchanged" 0.0 per cent in March 2018. On a y-o-y basis, Retail Turnover increased by 2.6 per cent, down from (a revised) 3.2 per cent in the pcp. Across the six ABS retail categories, the strongest growth was recorded for 'Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services' retailing on a m-o-m basis (1.3 per cent), whilst 'Food' retailing recorded the strongest y-o-y growth (3.5 per cent). The strongest jurisdiction in seasonally adjusted terms was Victoria (up 4.4 per cent to \$80.5 billion). According to the ABS, online retail turnover (more info [here](#)) decreased by 0.7 per cent on a m-o-m basis in April 2018 and totalled \$14.81 billion (or 4.7 per cent) of the \$314.24 billion retail market in the 12-months to April 2018.

AUSTRALIA POST ONLINE RETAIL REPORT: LOOKING PAST THE HEADLINE

Australia Post has released its 2018 eCommerce Industry Paper - [Inside Australian Online Shopping](#). Now in its third year, the 2018 edition states "...online spending grew by 18.7%" in 2017, a figure which has been reported on. However, whilst there has undoubtedly been growth in online retail, the methodology used to calculate total sales has changed since the last edition. As such, some care should be taken in drawing a like-for-like comparison to 2016. By our calculation, the actual growth for 2017 was ~11 per cent on a like for like basis. The report also doesn't delineate between 'pure play' and 'multi-channel' online retail (e.g. click & collect), the latter of which can boost 'traditional' retail sales, as we have previously mentioned ([Shop Talk 29/3/18](#)). It is also worth noting that the 'headline' figure relates to the value of online retail but the bulk of the analysis in the report focuses on delivery volumes and not value.

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