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MEDIA RELEASE

SA retail workers missing out on \$68 million under current shop trading hour regulations

- Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA) and National Retail Association (NRA) wage modelling outlines substantial missed employment and wage opportunities for South Australians as a result of current shop trading hour regulations.
- The newly released modelling shows the number of lost hours in SA from retailers not being able to open and trade on similar hours to other States is 2.2 million a year, while lost wages amount to more than \$68 million a year.
- The majority (72%) of lost wages and hours are attributed to smaller, specialty retailers.

New wage modelling released by the SCCA and NRA has detailed the significant missed opportunity for South Australian retail workers under current shop trading hour regulations.

The SCCA and NRA modelling, which is based on an eastern states style trading model of 9am-6pm on Saturdays and 9am-5pm on Sundays and public holidays (excluding Christmas Day, New Year's Day and before 12pm on Anzac Day), and additional hours on Black Friday and in the lead up to Christmas, conservatively estimates¹ that local workers are missing out on 2.2 million hours per year, resulting in more than \$68 million in lost wages.

Significantly, the data shows that it is employees at smaller and independent retailers who are most affected under current regulations, with \$49 million (or 72%) of lost wages attributed to specialty retail stores.

The existing regulations, which prohibit metropolitan Adelaide² retail outlets larger than 200sqm and supermarkets larger than 400sqm from opening before 11am on Sundays or at all on public holidays (without special exemptions), make it uneconomical for larger shopping centres to open their doors outside of these times, consequently impacting smaller retailers who are not subject to the same trading hour restrictions.

NRA Chief Executive Dominique Lamb said the data showed South Australian workers are "missing out" on wages and hours at a time when youth unemployment is a pressing issue for the state.

"An extra \$68 million in the pocket of South Australia's retail workers is a key reason for reforming trading hours, and I stress that this is based on conservative modelling and focussed only on staff working in-store," she said.

"Creating extra hours and wages for retail workers is even more critical given that retail is the country's the largest employer of young people and South Australia has the highest rates of youth unemployment in the nation.

¹ Modelling assumes 100 per cent uptake by major retailers in metropolitan Adelaide (both within and outside of shopping centres) and 85 per cent uptake by speciality retailers located within metropolitan Adelaide shopping centres with three staff on blended wage rates per speciality store.

² The Shopping Centre Council and National Retail Association modelling refers to metropolitan Adelaide as the current area where current shop trading restrictions apply and excludes the CBD and the Glenelg Tourist Precinct

"Our modelling isn't based on shops trading '24/7'. It's based on shops being able to trade earlier on Sunday mornings, later on Saturdays and on key public holidays – just like shops are able to in other jurisdictions.

"Importantly, as the modelling shows, enabling South Australia's stores to trade similar hours to stores in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, the ACT and the Northern Territory will not only benefit large retailers and the workers they employ, but workers at small retail businesses will be the ultimate winners."

SCCA Executive Director Angus Nardi said, "we know that when larger retailers are able to open during extended trading hours, around 25 smaller retailers choose open to leverage and benefit from the foot traffic generated by those large businesses."

"Our ongoing detailed modelling also highlights there is strong customer demand for extended trading hours, including delivering an overall net increase to customer demand."

Case Studies

The following examples are based on the SCCA and NRA modelling and are designed to demonstrate the wage benefits for South Australian workers under reformed shop trading hour regulations.

Case study #1

20-year-old level two casual worker in a fast food restaurant working 18 per week (10 hours weekdays @ \$21.30 per hour, four hours on Saturday @ \$26.63 per hour and four hours on Sunday @ \$31.96 per hour. Currently earns \$447.36 per week.

By adding one additional working hour on a Saturday and an additional two hours on Sunday, this worker would take home an extra \$90.55 per week, which represents a 20% increase. If this worker were to also work 8 hours on a public holiday, they would also pocket an additional \$383.44.

Case study #2

20-year-old level two casual worker in a Pharmacy working 18 hours per week (10 hours weekdays @ \$25.09 per hour, four hours on Saturday @ \$30.11 per hour and four hours on Sunday @ \$35.12 per hour. Currently earns \$511.82 per week.

By adding one additional working hour on a Saturday, an additional two hours on Sunday this worker would take home an extra \$100.35 per week, which represents a 20% increase. If this worker were to also work 8 hours on a public holiday, they would also pocket an additional \$401.44.

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