

ARA SUBMISSION

QUEENSLAND TRADING HOURS REGULATION SUNSET REVIEW

JULY 2024

The Australian Retailers Association (ARA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the Queensland Government's *Trading Hours Regulation Sunset Review*.

The ARA is the oldest, largest and most diverse national retail body, representing a \$420 billion sector that employs 1.4 million Australians – making retail the largest private sector employer in the country.

We represent the full spectrum of Australian retail, from our largest national and international retailers to our small and medium sized members, who make up 95% of our membership. Our members operate in all states and across all categories - from food to fashion, hairdressing to hardware, and everything in between.

A number of our largest members (including Woolworths, Coles and Bunnings) have extensive store networks and supply chains in Queensland, supporting local communities across the state – in metropolitan, regional and rural markets.

The ARA strongly supports the Queensland Office of Industrial Relations' (OIR) recommendation to allow the *Trading (Allowable Hours) Regulations 2014 (TAH Regulations)* to lapse in September 2024. In line with observations made by the OIR, the ARA's position is that there is no ongoing need for the TAH Regulation to support the effectiveness or efficiency of the TAH Act to meet its objectives.

The ARA believes that allowing the TAH Regulation to expire and not be replaced will reduce the administrative burden while having no justifiable impact on retailers.

Further, the ARA strongly advocates for the complete deregulation of retail trading hours to provide retailers with the flexibility to trade at the hours that suit their business and customers. Deregulation enables flexibility and allows retailers to cater for local demand, especially as we adapt to new ways of living and working, post-pandemic.

Consumers have access to online, often overseas-based retailers 24/7 and while bricks and mortar retailers do not necessarily want or need to be open 24/7, they do need the flexibility to tailor trading hours to meet the expectations of their customers and remain competitive.

Given the high proportion of our members with stores in Queensland, this is an important issue for the ARA, and we welcome the opportunity to provide this submission.

Any queries in relation to this submission can be directed to our policy team at policy@retail.org.au.