



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Wednesday 24 February 2016**

## **Devastating announcement for Masters staff**

The SDA is deeply disappointed with the announcement this afternoon that Masters stores will cease trading by mid-December across the country.

SDA National Secretary Gerard Dwyer said that while stores will remain open for the next 12-14 weeks this will be a very difficult period for staff.

“This is a devastating announcement for some 6,000 staff in light of recent improved trading and positive signals that some parties were interested in the business as a going concern.

Mr Dwyer said that the SDA will be working closely with members and Woolworths to secure ongoing employment wherever possible, and that processes have been put in place to that effect.

“The SDA has already commenced discussions with Masters and Woolworths regarding re-deployment of existing staff to other Woolworths businesses where practicable.

“We’ll be working hard to ensure that Masters staff members are offered alternative employment to ease the impact this will have on them and their families.

“Both the Union and the Company have the same priority of securing ongoing employment.

“Where re-deployment is not practicable Woolworths have guaranteed that all legal entitlements, including redundancy, will be paid and we’ll be holding them to that.

The SDA welcomed the announcement that Home Timber and Hardware (HTH) had been sold as a going concern to Metcash (Mitre 10) allowing the majority of staff to keep their jobs.

“This will be a great relief to staff inside HTH. Unfortunately, there are three sites that will close but once again the SDA has commenced discussions with HTH and will be working closely with staff and the Company to secure ongoing employment elsewhere where possible.

The SDA will have as many representatives on hand to support Masters and HTH employees and their families as possible. Any employee who is seeking urgent support should contact the SDA office in their respective branch.

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