



## **Media statement | 14 May 2020**

### **SDA Shopping Centre 10-point health and safety plan**

As governments start to lift their COVID-19 lockdowns, retail workers in clothing, department and other stores are readying themselves to return to work as long as it is safe to do so.

Shopping centres are where many of us meet as a community, but to have confidence shoppers need to know that their health will not be at risk as we regain our ability to congregate and catch up.

It is a fact that consumers can look forward to renewed freedom to shop largely because of the health and safety measures advocated by the SDA and introduced at those essential retail outlets that remained open during the early days of the COVID-19 emergency – notably supermarkets, service stations, pharmacies and fast food outlets.

These essential outlets have been remarkably free of COVID-19 outbreaks in large measure because of the SDA's promotion with retailers of its 10-point health and safety plan. (attached)

It is clear, however, that a repeat of the crowded scenes at shopping centres last weekend will jeopardise these early successes, risking a second wave of Coronavirus infection, forcing renewed restrictions on movement with even more dire consequences for the economy and employment.

For that reason, the SDA has already been in discussion with the Morrison government, the retailers and the shopping centres seeking agreement on a Ten Point Plan for Shopping Centre Health and Safety. (attached)

It builds on the success of the SDA's Retail Health and Safety Plan and is informed by recommendations from Federal and State health authorities.

As with supermarkets, it would require, among other things, that shopping centres have alcohol-based hand sanitiser available at building entrances, customer service desks and in food courts; police social distancing guidelines with one way queues, ground markings and supervision of escalators; enforce public gathering limits in stores, cafes, cinemas etc and maintain customer counts at entrances and in car parks; tape off every second sink in public toilets and arrange seating in food courts to comply with social distancing guidelines as well as regular cleaning of tables and chairs.

Retail workers want to get back to work to serve the community just as their fellows in supermarkets, service stations, pharmacies and fast food outlets have been able to do.

The last thing they want or need is for the relaxation in restrictions now underway to prove to be a false dawn, costing them work once again and making it even harder for the economy to recover.

The community need shopping centres open; retail employees want to serve them in safety; the economy needs them back at work; they and their families need the employment.

The SDA's Ten Point Retail Health and Safety Plan provided the template for health and safety in supermarkets, service stations, pharmacies and fast food outlets, enabling people to have food on their tables, petrol in their vehicles and medicines for their ailments, at the same time minimising the risks not only to the health and safety of retail workers, but of the community more broadly.

Agreement to the Ten Point Plan for Shopping Centre Health and Safety will give shoppers confidence, workers and shop owners increased certainty and confidence while minimising the risks of shopping centres becoming a source of second wave COVID-19 infection with even more diabolical consequences for shoppers, workers, retailers and the economy at large.