



**National Retail Association**

# MEDIA STATEMENT

**June 20, 2011**

## **Minimum Hours decision will open doors for young people**

The National Retail Association today praised the decision of Fair Work Australia to allow flexible working hours for casual student employees, saying it would open doors into future career paths for young people.

NRA executive director Gary Black said today's decision, which endorses the ability of school students to complete short shifts in retail businesses after school hours, was a victory for flexibility and common sense in the workplace relations regime.

"The National Retail Association congratulates Fair Work Australia for recognising the need to inject flexibility into the current retail award and give our young people a chance to get work experience, learn employability skills and develop a healthy work ethic," Mr Black said.

"With one in two young people relying on the sector for a job, retailers shoulder the burden of transitioning our young people from school to work and providing them with critical employability skills for their later careers.

"Parents across Australia understand that it has been increasingly difficult for their children to find work, and this has been very much as a result of the restrictive work arrangements imposed on to the retail sector through the modern award process.

"As Australia's retail sector continues to suffer because of the unfair tax and customs regime which heavily favours foreign retailers, job opportunities for young people will continue to shrink.

"In its submission to the Productivity Commission, the NRA has forecast that more 80,000 Australian retail jobs will be transferred off-shore over the next five years if we do not introduce an equitable tax and customs regime.

"This means that up to 40,000 youth jobs are at risk going forward. This situation would have worsened significantly if FWA had not acted to inject some flexibility into the general retail award to allow employers to create jobs for students.

"This decision will give employers the breathing space they need to continue creating jobs for young people, and we again congratulate FWA for its decision."

### **Media interviews:**

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