



National Retail Association

# MEDIA STATEMENT

July 4, 2011

## GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR RETAIL SNUFFED OUT BY MAY TRADE DATA

The glimmer of hope for Australian retailers provided by April trade data has been snuffed out by the latest results from the Australian Bureau of statistics today, the National Retail Association said.

NRA Executive Director Gary Black said the ABS results for May showed growth of just 2.16 per cent in seasonally-adjusted terms compared with May 2010.

“All retailers know this has been a difficult 12 months and, notwithstanding a hopeful outcome in April, these figures show the disappointing results have continued,” Mr Black said.

“While the food category showed good growth of 3.2 per cent, once you move away from essentials to discretionary spending the results are very flat. Sales of clothing, footwear and personal accessories declined by 2.61 per cent while sales in household goods and department store items showed almost no growth at all.”

Annual Retail Sales Growth by Category – (seasonally adjusted)

Category	Food	Household Goods	Clothing, Footwear & personal accessories	Department Stores	Other Retailing
Year to June 2010	1.76%	-0.1%	-0.85%	1.6%	1.02%
Year to July 2010	3.67%	0.46%	2.23%	0.29%	2.81%
Year to Aug 2010	2.35%	0.87%	-0.01%	-0.41%	6.52%
Year to Sept 2010	1.79%	1.76%	3.65%	0.74%	6.05%
Year to Oct 2010	2.85%	1.76%	-1.69%	-3.21%	3.59%
Year to Nov 2010	1.11%	0.69%	-3.74%	-2.39%	4.40%
Year to Dec 2010	1.77%	3.45%	1.91%	-0.51%	2.62%
Year to Jan 2011	4.12%	-1.90%	-3.34%	-4.08%	4.19%
Year to Feb 2011	5.76%	0.44%	1.01%	0.73%	4.91%
Year to Mar 2011	3.69%	1.69%	0.55%	-4.26%	3.89%
Year to Apr 2011	4.20%	-0.02%	1.19%	3.40%	7.24%
<b>Year to May 2011</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>0.84%</b>	<b>-2.61%</b>	<b>0.19%</b>	<b>4.97%</b>

Mr Black said the year-on-year results were even more sobering considering the 2010 data had itself shown little growth from the GFC period in 2009.

“Retailers have struggled with very difficult economic conditions for two years now. This is demonstrated both through the trade data and also the ABS employment figures.

“Retail employment was at an all-time high in November 2007. Since then, retailers have shed 60,000 full-time positions.

“While they have added around 50,000 part-time and casual positions, the total work hours for the sector have obviously fallen significantly.

“This loss of employment adds to the urgency around a fairer tax and customs regime and taking away the unfair advantage currently enjoyed by overseas-based on-line retailers.

“If the Australian Government won’t move to support retailers with a level playing field, jobs will continue to disappear from the Australian economy as retail spending goes overseas.”

**Gary Black is available for interviews. Contact Malcolm Cole on 0408 612 603**