



National Retail Association

# MEDIA STATEMENT

December 1, 2011

## ABS points to a happy Christmas and brighter new year for retail jobs

Today’s ABS figures pointing to modest but continued growth in retail trade were a good sign for business owners and the millions of Australians who relied on the sector for employment, the National Retail Association said today.

NRA executive director Gary Black said the growth during October, particularly in the areas of food and household goods, was a welcome boost leading into the important Christmas trading period.

And he predicted a modest increase in December trade from \$26.5 billion last year to around \$27.3 billion this month.

“It’s no secret that 2011 has been another difficult trading year for the retail sector. But with this increase in retail activity in October, coupled with the Reserve Bank’s decision to cut interest rates in November, points to a stronger Christmas period. This in turn will flow through to greater employment prospects in 2012,” Mr Black said.

Annual Retail Sales Growth by Category – (seasonally adjusted excluding cafe and restaurants)

Category	Food	Household Goods	Clothing, Footwear & personal accessories	Department Stores	Other Retailing	Australia Total (ex. Café & rest. Data)
Year to Nov 2010	1.11%	0.69%	-3.74%	-2.39%	4.40%	0.77%
Year to Dec 2010	1.77%	3.45%	1.91%	-0.51%	2.62%	2.06%
Year to Jan 2011	4.12%	-1.90%	-3.34%	-4.08%	4.19%	1.45%
Year to Feb 2011	5.76%	0.44%	1.01%	0.73%	4.91%	3.65%
Year to Mar 2011	3.69%	1.69%	0.55%	-4.26%	3.89%	2.31%
Year to Apr 2011	4.20%	-0.02%	1.19%	3.40%	7.24%	3.47%
Year to May 2011	3.23%	0.84%	-2.16%	0.19%	4.97%	2.21%
Year to June 2011	3.54%	-1.60%	-1.82%	-4.86%	5.85%	1.61%
Year to July 2011	4.12%	-0.34%	-7.53%	-2.22%	7.18%	2.06%
Year to Aug 2011	5.42%	2.18%	-6.64%	-3.57%	5.31%	2.85%
Year to Sept 2011	5.39%	3.03%	-8.15%	-3.84%	5.21%	2.81%
<b>Year to Oct 2011</b>	<b>4.94%</b>	<b>2.59%</b>	<b>-2.24%</b>	<b>-3.31%</b>	<b>6.02%</b>	<b>3.28%</b>



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Mr Black said the ABS figures showed a third consecutive month of strong growth in household goods, and reasonable growth in food and other retailing.

And while the categories of Department Stores and Clothing & Footwear continued to decline, the rate of negative growth had clearly slowed.

“There are definite signs that the trend is improving, and the sector is experiencing some revitalization. This would be further assisted by another rates increase when the Reserve Bank Board meets next week.”

In the state-by-state comparison, Western Australia continues to be the stand out, with growth of almost 10 per cent in the year to October, seasonally adjusted.

Slight improvements for New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland also indicated the sector had turned the corner, he said.

**Annual Retail Sales Growth by State – (seasonally adjusted)(includes cafe and restaurant data )**

State	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT
Year to Nov 2010	0.12%	4.30%	0.55%	-0.89%	1.52%	-2.13%	-3.23%	1.75%
Year to Dec 2010	0.72%	5.80%	1.36%	0.91%	1.33%	-2.63%	-2.79%	1.52%
Year to Jan 2011	1.23%	2.72%	1.56%	0.43%	3.27%	-2.90%	1.94%	3.84%
Year to Feb 2011	3.63%	2.76%	4.82%	1.58%	5.70%	-2.33%	3.00%	2.61%
Year to Mar 2011	1.35%	3.61%	2.09%	0.76%	4.67%	-3.38%	1.86%	0.84%
Year to Apr 2011	2.29%	5.86%	3.39%	-2.04%	5.54%	-2.79%	-0.31%	0.26%
Year to May 2011	-.30%	3.99%	3.52%	-2.30%	6.94%	-2.89%	0.40%	0.05%
Year to June 2011	-1.82%	3.24%	3.29%	-3.00%	7.09%	-1.84%	0.44%	-1.65%
Year to July 2011	-1.00%	2.07%	1.74%	-2.02%	8.78%	-0.39%	1.72%	-0.82%
Year to Aug 2011	-0.27%	2.59%	3.04%	-1.06%	8.88%	0.81%	2.49%	-0.77%
Year to Sept 2011	0.79%	1.70%	3.42%	-0.13%	7.96%	1.83%	2.55%	1.67%
<b>Year to Oct 2011</b>	<b>2.09%</b>	<b>3.19%</b>	<b>3.67%</b>	<b>0.21%</b>	<b>9.98%</b>	<b>-0.30%</b>	<b>7.55%</b>	<b>0.08%</b>

**Gary Black is available for media interviews.  
Contact CBC Group – Media and Public Affairs, on (07) 3112 5250**