



National Retail Association

MEDIA STATEMENT

January 9, 2011

ABS figures show retail sector is being transferred off shore

Today’s ABS figures show large swathes of the retail industry are being transferred off shore, placing local jobs and businesses at risk, the National Retail Association said today.

NRA executive director Gary Black said strong results for fresh and packaged food compared with weak results for other retail categories showed the damage being done by tax-free imports bought on the internet.

“Today’s figures continue the trend which has been evident since August last year. The food category continues to show strong activity, with growth of almost five per cent, seasonally adjusted, in the year to November 2011,” Mr Black said.

“However, once the food factor is removed, other retail trade continues to barely reach positive territory. For example, clothing, footwear and personal accessories were down 3.5 per cent over the year, and department stores were down four per cent. While Household Goods has lifted out of negative growth, the annual rate of growth could be described as anaemic at best.”

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 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%
Year to Oct 2011	4.94%	2.59%	-2.24%	-3.31%	6.02%	3.28%
Year to Nov 2011	4.96%	2.09%	-3.52%	-4.00%	5.95%	2.99%



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This is further evidence that the tax-free status enjoyed by overseas retailers – at the expense of local businesses – is causing significant damage to the retail sector.

“Retailing is the largest employer of young and low-skilled workers, and these are the people who will suffer most if the Federal Government continues to allow an uneven playing field.

On a state-by-state basis, NSW, Victoria and South Australia experienced poor growth, and once the food factor is removed it is clear that most retailers in those states are struggling.

“On a positive note, Queensland is showing signs of improved growth, while the numbers for Western Australia confirm the very high growth rates being experience in that state,” Mr Black said.

“However feedback from our members suggests that these high growth rates are not being experienced uniformly across the sector, and many retailers are finding conditions tough.”

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

State	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT
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%
Year to Oct 2011	2.09%	3.19%	3.67%	0.21%	9.98%	-0.30%	7.55%	0.08%
Year to Nov 2011	1.94%	1.24%	3.92%	1.41%	11.00%	0.35%	8.92%	-3.18%

The National Retail Association is Australia’s largest and most diverse retail association, representing large and small businesses across all areas of retail and hospitality.

Gary Black is available for media interviews.

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