



National Retail Association

MEDIA STATEMENT

February 16, 2012

Retailers join forces against IR laws

Australian retailers are renowned for their bitter battles over price, but they'll lay down their swords when they come together to discuss current and emerging trends at an Industrial Relations Breakfast Series hosted by the *National Retail Association* (NRA) in March.

Key speakers from the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry will educate retailers about recent industrial relations reforms which have added, and will continue to add, substantially to retail labour costs at a time when the retail sector is facing unprecedented challenges.

NRA Executive Director Gary Black said the organisation has taken a number of legal steps against the Australian Labor Government's industrial relations reforms which have negatively targeted the struggling retail industry.

"Retailers have come to realise that although they may work in completely different sectors that have very different demands, they have shared interests when it comes to award modernisation which will affect retail across the board," Mr Black said.

"Despite a promise of cost neutrality, award modernisation will add between five and 10 per cent to retail labour costs, and watered down definitions of equal pay will allow unions to push for higher pay rates in industries where female employment dominates.

"These breakfasts will also incorporate a discussion on actions the NRA is taking to defend the interests of Australian retailers and ensure the success and long term sustainability of our industry."

The NRA is encouraging all retail CEOs, CFOs, Operations Managers, Human Resources generalists and Industrial Relations specialists to attend the event.

"We are committed to educating retailers on economic and other effects of emerging industrial relations legislation," Mr Black said.

"Retailers must work together to understand and combat this harsh legislation which will cripple many retailers already facing so many other challenges."

The Sydney Industrial Relations Breakfast will be held on Thursday March 1 at the Radisson Blue Plaza Hotel, and the Melbourne event will be at the Marriott Hotel on Thursday March 15. Registration opens at 7.15am with a hot plated breakfast being served from 7.30am – 9:00am.

To register for this industry event contact Gemma Axford on 1800 RETAIL (738 245) or email events@nra.net.au. The breakfast costs \$45 for NRA members and \$75 for non-members.

The National Retail Association is Australia's largest and most representative retail organisation with more than 3000 members and affiliates located across all states and



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territories. Its membership includes the majority of Australia's national retail chains and extends across the retail take-away food and fast food sectors.

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