

MEDIA RELEASE

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Bulky goods retailers push for change in SA planning

The Bulky Goods Retailers Association (BGRA) members gathered in Adelaide yesterday for their quarterly members' forum to discuss the critical need for planning reform in South Australia to accommodate the growing demand for bulky goods retailing facilities in the state.

Industry and Trade, and Urban Development and Planning Minister Paul Holloway joined the BGRA members for lunch before presenting on the Rann Government's commitment to review policy and zoning relating to bulky goods retailing.

Significantly, this is the first time the BGRA has held a forum in Adelaide and member attendance was high despite the need for almost all members to travel interstate.

"The South Australian market is bursting with both opportunity and demand for bulky goods retailing because it has been neglected by both the government and retailers alike," said BGRA President Ian Robinson who highlights the success of the Mile End Homemaker Centre as a strong indicator for consumer demand.

"In South Australia, outdated planning laws have failed to recognise the unique needs of bulky goods retailing, leading the retailers to focus on other markets such as WA rather than contend with South Australian planning policy which has proven very costly and time consuming," continued Mr Robinson.

"But today South Australia's strong economy and low supply of bulky goods is very attractive to the retailers who now want to expand within the state. The members are all seeking change in state planning policy and zoning."

Minister Holloway acknowledged in his keynote speech that the South Australian planning system has not evolved in keeping with the changes in retailing over recent years, resulting in unsuitable policies and processes, and a lack of suitably-zoned land. The Minister confirmed his commitment to investigate suitable land for rezoning, and agreed to work with the BGRA in the review of South Australian planning strategy in an effort to meet the needs of the retailers.

"Our members are very encouraged by the Minister's comments. It's now incumbent upon us to be proactive in contributing to the draft planning strategy to ensure our needs are understood and accommodated," said BGRA Executive Director Philippa Kelly.

Other keynote speakers at the BGRA forum included Ms Maria Lee, Senior Property Analyst from BIS Shrapnel, who presented their latest Bulky Goods Retailer Survey, and Mr Greg Vincent from Master Plan, an experienced South Australian planning consultant.

According to BIS Shrapnel, the bulky goods retail sector now represents over 20% of Australian retail trade, or \$33.5 billion. The sector is worth \$2.6 billion in South Australia.

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