

[Received by email 31/8/11]

Re: Economic Structure and Performance of the Australian Retail Industry

Dear...

In view of the SBS Insight programme last night I wish the Commission to consider why we shop online, purchasing here in Australia and overseas

Firstly, I live in Crows Nest, Queensland. For me to go shopping, it costs \$20 in petrol for a single trip with 40 minutes it takes to drive each way.

There are so many products that I can't purchase here in Crows Nest or even in Toowoomba, which is my closest large shopping centre. Yes, we do have an IGA supermarket to purchase basics, but anything further, I do need to go to Toowoomba.

I will give you a couple of examples.

Firstly, some books are not available in Australia. I purchased "The Biography of John Adams" from Amazon.com.

I purchased sewing patterns direct from McCalls, Vogue, Simplicity etc. The cost and delivery was cheaper than if I drove to Toowoomba, also the service to find the pattern I like, find the salesperson. Then after 3 hours of looking for the salesperson and looking for the pattern, I'm told that either the particular pattern was not available, or my size was not available. The major factor for me has been the service when I entered a shop and found no service at all. Most of the time I would walk out and not buy anything. Go home have a cup of coffee and smoke a couple of cigarettes.

These days, I don't smoke and I only drink tea which is cheaper online than at my local AGI supermarket.

The sewing pattern manufacturers even email me with their specials they have for the beginning or end of the season and delivery is the cost of a jiffy bag. And I can shop while sitting at my computer with a cup of tea beside me, at my own leisure in selecting what I want.

Also, I can purchase music from Amazon for under \$20 and that includes postage. If I want the same product from Australia, as I said, it costs me petrol, parking, and the CD costs anywhere from \$29.95 upwards, unless I want to hunt around. My mother wanted Andre Rieu and I found it was for sale at several shops here but at a cost that I, as a pensioner can't afford, so I went online and found it at a third of the price with delivery included.

I shop at Deals Direct and Catch of the Day. It is so handy for me and the prices are far less than I can pay at our local supermarket, even with the delivery charge it is still cheaper than purchasing locally or driving to say Highfield or Toowoomba.

Adding GST for online purchases from overseas is just greed by the government for more taxes. I could add a piece on revenue raising. It is more important to give me a notice for speeding, than going after the hoons in the car chasing me whilst I was travelling home from Toowoomba to Crows Nest. It was only the fact that the police coming in the opposite direction saved me, at a cost of \$200 for speeding. My life should have been more important than the money. But that is another issue.

Back to my ultimate gripe for and against online shopping and from where.

If online purchases were changed from the way they are at the moment, I will stop shopping altogether and be one of the ignorant country folk who just purchase locally. My policy will be like the rest of the country people. If I don't see it I don't need it.

It is difficult for me to make a written submission as I need to purchase a PDF programme and I can't afford it at this time. So I am asking you to please present this email to the relevant person, to look into the matter, why many of us, who go online, do so, for some of us who can use the computer and rely on the computer.

I am 63. I found that the computer and internet has made such a profound impact in my life today. I am still learning so much that I could not have found in books. The world has opened up and I am finding new things daily online.

If the Commission wishes any further details they can contact me via this email and I would gladly give my view.

World governments decided on "Globalization" so why suppress the people from exploring and purchasing where convenient. Our government even wants to waste umpteen billions to improve broadband. It's not necessary. I'm in the country, its fine for me.

Sincerely

Irene Rolles