

To whom it may concern,

As retail employees at Readings Carlton, we are alarmed to hear of the National Retail Association's proposals for our future at work.

We feel we have to respond to the proposal that the minimum wage be reduced, penalty rates scrapped and/or reduced and the minimum shift reduced.

We would argue that:

- The minimum wage is currently insufficient. The July rise in the minimum wage still did not fully address the fact that most minimum wage rises have not kept up with the increased cost of living (and thus were effectively pay cuts). That a further cut is proposed is unacceptable. A worker doing full time hours cannot live on the proposed \$15.33/hour!
- Penalty rates are compensation for working anti-social days and hours. Many workers – especially young workers – rely on them to survive.
- Agreed hours and the three-hour minimum shift requirement grant workers a degree of job security. Without this our day-to-day lives will become unjustifiably more precarious.

We do not accept that driving down wages and conditions is the solution to allegedly falling profits.

We would also argue that the Retail Association's proposals are disingenuous, couched as they are in terms of the global financial crisis and internet shopping, yet often coupled with references to AWAs, which pre-date said crisis.

'Flexibility' is thrown around as if it is of mutual benefit to employer and employee, when in reality it simply means poorer standards of living and more precarious daily lives for all retail workers. Similarly, when 'productivity' is simply used to mean increased profits at the expense of our living conditions and security it is a misnomer.

Kind regards,

Chris Dite, Christine Gordon, Leanne Hall, Andrew McDonald, Michael Wallace, Margaret Snowdon, Julia Jackson, Imogen Dewey, Marion Rankine, Holly Harper, Fiona Hardy, Lisa Illean, Kate O'Mara, Lisa MacKinney, Jason Austin, Milo Adler-Gillies, Ed Moreno, Robyn Greber, Dani Solomon, Roland Bisshop, Ingrid Josephine