

TIME TO REVIEW GOVERNMENT-IMPOSED SHOP CLOSURES SAYS RETAIL NZ

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Retail NZ says that it's time to review outdated laws that ban many shops opening over Easter while giving others an unfair competitive advantage.

"Shopping is a huge family pastime for many New Zealanders," Retail NZ Chief Executive Mark Johnston said today. "Many New Zealanders want to be able to go shopping over the long Easter weekend - but at present many shops are banned from opening by Government regulation. In 2015, when people can shop 24/7 over the Internet, the regulations really don't make sense, and it's time they were reviewed.

"Not only is the current law outdated, but it's filled with exemptions that render it meaningless. A corner dairy can open, but not a supermarket. You can go shopping in Queenstown or Taupo, but not Wanaka or Rotorua. A shop can be filled with workers packing Internet orders - but it can't open the front door to the public. None of these restrictions make sense in 2015."

Mr Johnston said he understood that not everyone wants to shop or work over public holidays such as Easter. "In 2015, people expect to make the best choices to suit their personal needs. I'm not saying every shop must open, that everyone must shop, or that everyone must work - but if people want to, why should the Government get in the way?

"We'll be writing to the Government in the near future to request changes to the current law. I'd like to think these could be implemented before Easter 2016".