



MEDIA RELEASE  
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## **SUNNY XMAS SEASON BUT CLOUDS ON EMPLOYMENT HORIZON - RETAIL NZ**

On the back of a successful Black Friday and Christmas trading season, retailers are feeling positive heading into 2019, but the long-term trend is for retailers to expect to employ fewer staff, according to the latest Retail Radar report by Retail NZ.

“56 per cent of retailers reported that they met or exceeded their targets in the quarter ended 31 December, up from 46 per cent in the previous quarter,” Greg Harford, Retail NZ’s General Manager Public Affairs said today. “While 44 per cent of retailers still failed to hit their targets, the turnaround does show the importance of the final quarter of the calendar year in helping retailers survive and prosper. Black Friday fell within this period, and generated massive sales, more than in previous years, and was a key driver of success.

“While retailers had previously indicated that there are inflationary pressures in the market, a strongly competitive sector is keeping a lid on prices, with just 30 per cent of retailers expecting prices to increase during the next quarter - down from 41 per cent in the previous quarter.

“The latest Retail Radar report shows an ongoing trend towards reducing staff numbers in the retail sector. Since the 2017 General Election, we have seen a noticeable and ongoing increase in the number of retailers planning to reduce staff numbers quarter-on-quarter. This may be due to economic uncertainty as well as concerns about the Minimum Wage and the Government’s intentions for the industrial relations framework.”

Retail Radar is a quarterly snapshot of retailer sentiment published by Retail NZ. [Click here](#) to see the latest report.

**For further information, please contact:**

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