

15 October 2004

CHRISTMAS DAY TRADING - BRITISH RETAIL CONSORTIUM COMMENT:

Whilst the Christmas shopping period is a crucial time for large stores, trading on Christmas day in most cases has proven uneconomical for the few retailers who have tried it as it is one holiday where consumers are not particularly interested in shopping. The proposed changes to the law will not be a major concern for retailers, as there is simply not a demand.

Recent figures from the DTI reflect this, showing more than 90% of retailers have no intention to open up for business so the change in law will have little impact. The idea to enforce a ban on large stores opening seems unnecessary and a little heavy-handed. Retail should be viewed on a level playing field to other businesses such as hotels and restaurants, which have no restrictions.

Scotland also is facing a ban on trading for both Christmas day and New Years day, but with a global reputation as the place to be at New Year, a ban on shops opening at this important time could irreversibly harm Scotland's reputation as a tourist and retail destination.