



PUSH FOR HOLIDAY TRADING TO MAKE MALL TOURIST MECCA

PRESSURE is mounting on the State Government to declare Rundle Mall a designated tourist precinct, allowing it to trade on public holidays.

Key players in the tourism industry, the City Council and Rundle Mall Management Authority (RMMA) say the Mall - like Glenelg - should be a tourist zone under the Shop Trading Hours Act.

The RMMA, which represents about 700 Mall retailers, is now in talks with the government to change the law so traders can open if they want on selected public holidays, such as Adelaide Cup, Easter Monday and the Queen's Birthday. Under the current law, shops with a floor space of less than 200sq/m, or those selling exempt goods such as hardware, are allowed to trade on public holidays.

RMMA acting chairman Richard Hayward said the Mall attracted 85 per cent of tourists who came to the CBD, or 23 million people a year, and generated \$800 million in annual sales turnover.

"It's hard to understand why Glenelg is a tourist precinct and the Mall is not," Mr Hayward, a City councillor, said. "If 85 per cent of tourists visit Rundle Mall then it's a tourist precinct."

The City Council voted at last week's meeting to continue discussions with the government following a motion by Cr Ralph Clarke.

A staff report to the meeting stated the argument for designating the strip a tourist precinct was "indeed compelling".

Cr Clarke said there was "no logical reason" for the strip not to be declared a major tourist hub for SA.

"It's nonsense that people can come to the city in their tens of thousands to visit the zoo, the botanic gardens, the museum and the art gallery but not be able to shop in Rundle Mall," he said after the meeting.

South Australian Tourism Industry Council CEO Ward Tilbrook said opening Rundle Mall on public holidays would benefit the entire state.

“It could bring a bit of life back into the city.”

Adelaide Convention Bureau CEO Damien Kitto said public holiday trading would “add to the experience” of business visitors who are in town for conventions.

Industrial Relations Minister Paul Holloway said the government had already reviewed trading and denied there was enough demand for an extension: “We believe the balance is right.”