

RETAIL TRADING ACT 2008 DECISION**REASON FOR DECISION**

1. I, Natalia Reed, am an officer holding a delegation from the Secretary under the *Retail Trading Act 2008 (Act)* to exercise the functions prescribed in that Act.
2. On 29 January 2025, Sokich Pty Ltd trading as The Bottle-O Wentworth Point (**Applicant**) made an application under section 10 of the Act as occupier of a shop at Shop D, 4A The Piazza, Wentworth Point NSW 2127 (**Shop**), for the Shop to be exempt from the requirement to be kept closed on Anzac Day 2025 (**Application**).
3. I have considered the Application and public comments which were received.
4. On this day I have decided to refuse the Application as I am not satisfied that, as required by section 10(2) of the Act, it is in the exceptional circumstances of the case in the public interest to do so, having regard to the following matters:
 - (a) the nature of the Shop and the kinds of goods sold by the Shop.
 - (b) the need for the Shop to be kept open on the days concerned.
 - (c) the likely effect of the proposed exemption on the local economy, tourism and small businesses and other businesses in the area.
 - (d) the likely effect of the proposed exemption on employees of, or persons working in, the Shop.
5. In making this decision I have taken into account the principles enunciated in a decision of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal (**Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Association v Director General of Services Technology and Administration and K-Mart Australia Limited [2010] NSW ADT 312**) that the test under section 10 is a two-step process, there being a need for both exceptional circumstances and for the granting of the exemption to be in the public interest.
6. The Application was placed on public exhibition for a period of no less than 14 days from 01 February 2025 and public comment was sought. One public submission was received; from the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees' Association, New South Wales (SDA NSW).

7. I have now considered the circumstances raised by the Shop, as well as the submission from SDA NSW.
8. The Applicant submitted the following as a claim for exceptional circumstances:
 - (a) The Shop is an independently owned delicatessen and bottle shop.
 - (b) The Shop services local residents.
 - (c) The Shop is not a corporate store and only one staff member would be required to work.
9. Whilst I acknowledge the circumstances raised by the Shop, I do not consider these qualify as exceptional circumstances in accordance with section 10(2) of the Act for the following reasons:
 - (a) Independent shop ownership (non-corporate) and a customer base of local residents are not circumstances that can be considered out of the ordinary course, or unusual, or special, or uncommon.
 - (b) Similarly, the goods sold by the Shop and requirement for only one staff member to work in the Shop could reasonably be considered a regular, routine or normally encountered circumstance in many shops in NSW.
 - (c) Having regard to the rationale of the Act, there should be a general presumption against trading on restricted trading days and there appears to be no exceptional circumstance in place to warrant the granting of an exemption.
10. The Applicant submitted the following reasons as to why they believed granting an exemption would be in the public interest:
 - (a) The Shop sells delicatessen goods – cured meats, cheeses, groceries and alcohol.
 - (b) The Shop provides local households with an essential service and is owned and operated by locals.
 - (c) If the exemption were granted, local residents would have an essential service available from a locally owned business in an area with no alternative options.
 - (d) Only one staff member would be required to work on the restricted trading day.
11. I do not consider the reasons provided by the Applicant sufficiently demonstrate that granting the Shop an exemption is in the public interest in accordance with section 10(2) of the Act for the following reasons:
 - (a) The Application relates to one single day, with unrestricted trading available under the Act on both the day immediately before, and the day immediately after Anzac Day. This does not indicate a significant restriction of access to essential delicatessen goods, groceries or alcohol for the general public.
 - (b) No evidence was provided by the Applicant in support of the claim that the Shop is an essential service located in an area with no alternative options. There were also no public submissions supporting this claim.
 - (c) While the Shop is locally owned and will require only one employee to work to on a restricted trading day, 'public interest' refers to the interest of the general public, not that of individuals, employees, or employers.

- (d) The SDA submission refers to Anzac Day as a day of important cultural and historical significance and notes the restriction of trading on this day is in keeping with community sentiment on the solemn nature of Anzac Day.
- (e) The notion of 'public interest' refers to matters that might affect the public as a whole, which does not appear to be the case in this instance.

Natalia Reed
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NSW Fair Trading
07/03/2025