

Submitted via consultation hub

AADA submission – Public Holiday Review 2025

The Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA) welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the Public Holiday Review consultation paper.

The AADA represents over 350 new car and truck dealers in Western Australia (WA), which range from family-owned small businesses to larger and publicly owned businesses, operating in regional and remote areas across the state. WA franchised new car and truck dealers employ almost 8000 people directly, with a total economic contribution of around \$2.3 billion annually. Each year, WA franchised new car dealers also complete over 4 million individual service, repair and maintenance jobs and invest more than \$4.2 million annually in training.

Additional public holiday

The AADA considers that the current WA public holiday and trading hour arrangements are appropriate in providing a fair and reasonable balance between employee work life balance and dealership operational needs. Under the WA *Retail Trading Hours Act 1987*¹, vehicle sales are prohibited on Sundays and public holidays, and dealerships must close by 1pm on Saturdays. As a result, dealerships operate within a balanced operating window each week, allowing for sufficient downtime for employees and serving as an attractive value proposition for attracting talent to the state.

The AADA submits that maintaining the current model also supports a level playing field for all new car dealers in WA. Ensuring that all dealerships operate within the same designated trading windows ensures the industry avoids a competitive race to extend hours at the expense of employee satisfaction and business sustainability. The combination of nationally recognised and WA-declared public holidays already provides ample recognition of significant days, and further changes would unnecessarily disrupt an arrangement that is working well for both businesses and employees.

The AADA considers that a detailed cost benefit analysis, which takes into account the unique features of new car retailing in WA, should be conducted ahead of any addition to current public holiday schedules.

¹ Retail Trading Hours Act https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_840_homepage.html

Alignment with other states

The AADA also considers that rearranging WA's existing state public holidays to align with a majority of other Australian jurisdictions is a common sense move. This is particularly so given that none of WA's three state public holidays are held on the same day as any other state or territory public holiday.

Aligning existing state public holidays would mean that WA businesses are operating on a similar calendar to the rest of Australia, making interstate scheduling, banking, and business dealings simpler. However, any changes to WA's schedule of public holidays must be conducted with thorough industry consultation and notice time, to minimise impacts to businesses.

New car dealers as franchisees

As franchised new car dealers operate within the franchising system, they are subject to franchise agreements drafted by Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs). These agreements often require dealerships to remain open and trade during all available hours permitted under relevant legislation. As a result, even if a dealer identifies clear operational benefits in closing on a particular day, such as a public holiday where trading is allowed but not mandatory, they may still be obliged to open. If they fail to do so, they risk breaching their franchise agreement, which can carry significant consequences for the dealership.

This means that clear, regulated trading hours and public holidays, which determine the times and dates of operation for new car dealerships, assist in providing consistency across dealership businesses, protecting dealer compliance, and supporting balanced and predictable working conditions for employees. The AADA sees no reason for this to change and would urge that the current arrangements be maintained.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss our submission and participate in any further consultation. If you require further information or clarification in respect of any matters raised, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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