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Parking Industry Seeks Consultation on Legislation

Parking Australia - the association for the Parking industry, has today expressed its concern around the lack of consultation regarding the policy and introduction of legislation (in Victoria) by the Andrews Government, which removes the ability of a private property owner and manager to reasonably identify and seek to recover a fee from motorists who may have breached their terms and conditions at the parking facility.

This shift in policy direction without consultation does not pave the way for alternate considerations for the operation of private parking facilities and has the ability to impact on other business such as retailers. Parking Australia will soon launch an Accredited Operator Scheme for those managing parking facilities, which is a rigorous scheme supported by a Code of Practice. This scheme will clearly identify those car parks that have passed the compliance checks required and adhere to a series of consistent practices.

The issue of unauthorised vehicles parked for longer than designated can have a significant impact on shopping centres and retailers. Drivers that overstay especially commuters who are travelling elsewhere, have the potential to take up spaces which could otherwise be churned over up to six times per day.

"This blanket ban on parking facility operators to recover fees from motorists will not only mean that there is no deterrent to stop motorists for example, blocking emergency exits, but it will also mean that property owners with their own parking spaces will have no recourse against a driver who repeatedly parks in their space or on their land. This will also extend to unauthorised use of spaces for disabled drivers, parents with prams and seniors due to the absolute impunity that this proposed legislation would mean"- said Parking Australia Chief Executive Lorraine Duffy.

Recent research by the University of Technology Sydney, regarding the impacts of such legislation being introduced, revealed that it has the potential to undermine the effectiveness of transport plans designed to move people in more efficient and sustainable ways, create economic harm to local retailers whose parking spaces are filled by commuters rather than shoppers and provide a subsidy to drivers thus making driving relatively more attractive in comparison with sustainable transport modes.

CEO Ms Duffy further noted that "Parking Australia supports reasonable and proportionate enforcement and encourages its members to engage in parking management practices that are fair for all. We are committed to raising standards in the parking industry via our Accredited Operator Scheme and have invited Government to engage with us to facilitate the delivery of effective and efficient parking without impacting on other sectors".

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