



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP**  
Member for Heffron  
Minister for Planning  
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

---

*Thursday 6 August, 2009*

**10-DAY PLANNING APPROVALS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR BUSINESS TO DO BUSINESS**

A fast-track planning approval system for businesses will come into effect next month, potentially saving small retailers and other businesses thousands of dollars each.

Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, today announced the NSW Commercial and Industrial Code, the next step the NSW Government is taking in building Australia's best planning system.

"We're in a global financial crisis and it is important that we help business get on with doing business," Ms Keneally said.

**"At the moment many businesses, including small retailers, have been required to lodge a development application (DA) with council when moving into, and fitting out, a new shop.**

"For example, a retailer may have to lodge a DA when changing the use of an existing shopfront from a shoe shop to a book store, where the only physical changes required are new shelving and signage.

"Now this book store retailer would be able to use the Commercial Code, which is a 10 day "checklist style" approval, instead of going through a development application process.

**"In addition to new premises, under the Code 10-day approvals can also apply to businesses wanting to do minor improvements to their existing buildings."**

**The Property Council of Australia has advised the 10-day approval could save retailers up to \$4,500 each in rent savings, compared to about 28 days it takes to get DA approval.**

The indicative saving outlined for commercial offices using the Code is \$3,400, and for industrial facilities, \$74,000. Actual savings will depend on the specific circumstances of each project.

The Code introduces State-wide rules for internal fit-outs, minor works such as awnings and signage and changing the use of existing retail, commercial office and industrial facilities.

Under the Code, applications which involve structural alterations or fire safety measures will require a ten-day approval from an accredited certifier or a council.

If the application is of a minor, low impact nature it may be exempt from planning approval. This includes works such as the installation of an ATM, new identification signage and less complex use changes such as switching from one type of shop to another within an existing retail premises.

**"If just 10 per cent of the State's retail tenancies use the Code each year, between them they would potentially save \$40 million dollars per year," Ms Keneally said.**

*Page 1 of 2*



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP**  
Member for Heffron  
Minister for Planning  
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

---

*Thursday 6 August, 2009*

“This does not include savings for commercial office or industrial businesses, which could add up to tens of millions of dollars more.

**“There are some 75,000 lots zoned commercial in NSW (encompassing retail, office and business premises) and 77,000 industrial-zoned lots which will be able to use the Code.”**

The Property Council of Australia’s NSW Executive Director, Ken Morrison, welcomed the announcement.

“This first stage release of the Code is strongly welcomed as a key part of the Government’s planning improvements,” Mr Morrison said.

“Our analysis shows significant red tape reduction and cost savings could be realised with proper implementation.

“Future stages of the Code that cover new buildings and external additions will be highly anticipated by industry.”

The Department of Planning will conduct implementation workshops for planning practitioners and council staff throughout August, prior to the NSW Commercial and Industrial Code coming into effect on 7 September, 2009.

Further details on the Commercial Code are available at the Department of Planning website: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/commercialcode](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/commercialcode)

***Media Contact: Phil McCall – (02) 9228 5811 or 0438 619 987***