

*Under Embargo until  
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To: Retail, Employment, Home Affairs, Political

## **NEW MINIMUM WAGE RISES COULD COST 20,000 RETAIL JOBS**

Retailers have today warned that another rise in the National Minimum Wage could lead to more than 20,000 jobs being lost and would cost the retail sector an extra £2.7 billion.

In a BRC survey on the impact of the NMW, 44% of retailers said they would be forced to make job cuts if the Low Pay Commission recommends an increase to £5.20. The survey also revealed that the rise to £4.85 has already cost retailers £1.7 billion.

Dr Kevin Hawkins, BRC Director General, said: "There is clearly no justification for further increases to the NMW in real terms. The rise to £4.85 has already cost the industry £1.7 billion and already jeopardised jobs.

"The survey has confirmed retailer's fears, that an ill thought out decision on this will hit every retailer hard. The retail industry employs 2.8 million people – 11% of the total UK workforce but many retailers will have no choice but to make job cuts.

"We have provided the evidence and it is now up to the Low Pay Commission to act appropriately and keep the wage at a sensible level in line with current economic conditions."

### **Ends**

The survey also shows the impact on wage differentials and benefit packages.

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The BRC represents a whole range of retailers, including the large multiples, department stores and independent shops, selling a wide selection of products through centre of town, out of town, rural and virtual stores.