



Opinion

Australia is a trading nation

By Senator the Hon DON FARRELL,
Minister for Trade and Tourism, Special Minister of State

Australia is a trading nation. One in four Australian jobs rely on trade, and last year our two-way trade in goods tipped more than \$1 trillion. We know that international shipping plays a vital role in Australia's trade and the global supply chain. That's why the Albanese Labor Government is working to stabilise and expand our trading relationships, by helping our traders tap into new markets around the globe, while simplifying our border processes at home.

Since coming to government less than three years ago, we've focussed on restoring our relationship with Australia's largest trading partner, and have now secured the re-entry of nearly \$20 billion worth of Australian exports to China. At the same time, we've been backing our exporters with new trade agreements with the United Kingdom, India, and the United Arab Emirates, while focussing on building deeper economies ties in Southeast Asia.

Bolstering our supply chain resilience remains a top priority, so our quality goods can reach global markets, and Australian consumers receive the products they need at lower prices. When it comes to commercial shipping - we can make a real difference delivering more efficient cross-border systems, making trade cheaper, faster, and simpler for businesses.

Government is delivering for business

Working closely with industry, the Albanese Government is focussed on improving border processes. This includes streamlining border controls, simplifying compliance, and making it easier for government and business to share information - we aim to give traders time back to do what they

do best. The Go Global Toolkit offers online export information and advice to help Australian businesses expand overseas and make use of our free trade agreements. Businesses that use the Toolkit save over 1,000 hours across the export journey, compared to businesses that don't.

For importers - our new simplified biosecurity portal allows industry to book and manage import cargo inspections online through a 24/7 portal, making this process faster and easier. Close to 90 per cent of inspection requests are now lodged through the portal. Many of Australia's shippers will also see the improvements to the Integrated Cargo System, including real-time system notifications for industry to manage logistics operations, which will increase certainty for businesses while reducing administrative costs.

Streamlining our trade for the future

We will continue to progressively simplify rules and processes, improve the user experience for business and digitalise manual processes. Through the Digital Trade Accelerator Program, Australian traders can expect smoother clearance of goods with better access to trade-related data for businesses. Improved risk profiling by government authorities will strengthen safeguards at our borders for all stakeholders involved - businesses, government entities, and the community.

We are prioritising the shift to paperless trade, including by aligning our legislation with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records. Australia led international efforts on paperless trade initiatives at this years'

APEC meetings in Peru. Streamlined and more effective trade will support faster movement of goods through our ports, to connect us with the world.

We will continue to work with partners in our region including through the Green and Digital Shipping Corridor, which will help decarbonise and digitalise shipping routes between Singapore and Australia. This arrangement represents a major step forward for Singapore and Australia in taking a joint leadership role by supporting global efforts to decarbonise the maritime industry, including by trialling green and digital solutions across various shipping activities and port operations.

As we look ahead to 2025, Australia's trading relationships are back on stable footing, and our businesses are well placed to take advantage of the enormous opportunities ahead.

I trust you will enjoy this years' Shipping Australia Annual Review. ▲