



The Voice for Australia's exporters



# Trade Policy Update

13 April 2015

## What has the ECA been doing to represent your business?

One of the core functions of the Export Council of Australia (ECA) is trade policy advocacy. The team at the ECA continues to work hard to represent the challenges and opportunities facing Australia's international trade community to Government. We do so by meeting with key government decision makers, providing submissions on issues directly relating to trade, facilitating engagement between exporters/importers and key decision makers, participating in industry advisory committees, as well as through our annual Trade Policy Recommendations document.

Ultimately, with the support of its Trade Policy Committee and the National Advisory Council, the ECA aims to coordinate industry's voice on the key issues affecting trade in order to facilitate positive outcomes for exporters and importers.

Here is a brief summary of what the ECA has been doing to assist its members and the broader international trade community thus far in 2015:

### 2015 EMDG Review:

- Surveyed the ECA and ACCI's members on EMDG issues and utilised data from the latest Australia's International Business Survey to help inform the submission we provided to the EMDG Secretariat.
- The ECA met with Michael Lee, the EMDG Reviewer, and his team to express our support for the scheme and its importance to the export community.
- The ECA, in partnership with Crowe Horwarth, organised a roundtable, with Michael Lee and 15 exporters to facilitate discussion around how the grant directly assists business and their views on the future of the scheme.

### The ECA provided submissions on the following issues:

- **The proposed WTO Government Procurement Agreement**

The ECA supports Australia's accession to the WTO GPA given the significant benefits it will offer Australian exporters through improving access to international procurement markets and promoting transparency and non-discrimination in the tendering process.

- **The Inquiry into the Defence Trade Controls Amendment Bill**

The ECA supports the proposed amendments to the Defence Trade Controls Act 2012 as existing legislation does not adequately address new security threats that stem from modern communication methods and the non-physical export of controlled goods and technology. While supportive of the Bill, the ECA believes it is imperative that the Government finds the appropriate balance so that Australian exporters are not overburdened with regulation and costs that impede on their international competitiveness. **Note: This Bill has now been passed.**

- **The Inquiry into the Efic Act Amendment Bill**

The ECA supports the Efic Act Amendment Bill as it will expand Efic's powers to allow direct lending for export transactions involving all goods, not just capital goods, and provides for competitive neutrality principles to apply to Efic's operations. With only 5% of exports from Australia being capital goods, Efic's scope to lend is currently narrow. Amending the Act will expand Efic's capacity to support

Australian business, particularly SMEs. (The ECA was extensively referred to in the report of the inquiry.) **Note: This Bill has now been passed.**

- **The Australia-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement**

The ECA supports international agreements that serve to further liberalise trade between Australia and the rest of the world as trade is a driver of economic growth, job creation and long-term prosperity. It is also clear from AIBS results that there is the appetite from the Australian export community for a trade agreement with India given that over 100 respondents indicated a trade agreement with India specifically would be useful to their business. Therefore, the ECA supports the Australian Government's commitment to pursue a CECA with India, in so far as it has assurance that real gains can and will be made.

- **The Exposure Drafts of proposed new Regulations to the Customs Act to replace the 1926 Regulations.**
- **The Senate Inquiry into the Commonwealth's Treaty-Making process**
- **The Post Implementation Review of the Organised Crime Act**

#### The ECA met with the follow individuals and organisations:

- Trade and Investment Minister, Andrew Robb's advisor on three occasions
- The Productivity Commission regarding its Review into Australia's Services Exports
- Minister for Small Business, Bruce Bilson's advisors
- The Minister for Infrastructure and Science, Ian Macfarlane's advisors
- Regular engagement with DFAT, AusIndustry, Customs and IP Australia
- Andrew Hudson, a Director of the ECA and the Chair of the Trade Policy Committee, visited Austrade, the Victorian Government representatives, Westpac and the ANZ Bank during trip through Asia in January.

#### Representatives from the ECA also sit on the following committees:

- Industry Advisory Group of Customs Trusted Trader Programme
- Cargo Working Group of the Office of Transport Security
- ATO/Customs Working Group on Transfer Pricing

This year we also welcomed some fresh faces onto our Trade Policy Committee. The committee brings together a diverse range of industry experience and trade expertise, which will allow us to expand our trade policy reach and more effectively advocate on behalf of exporters and importers.

<b>Andrew Hudson</b>	Gadens/ECA	Partner/Director and Chair of TPC
<b>Lisa McAuley</b>	ECA	CEO
<b>Stacey Mills-Smith</b>	ECA	Trade Policy and Research Manager
<b>Peter O'Byrne</b>	Consultant to the ECA	ECA Industry and Government Relations Advisor
<b>Kirsten Sayers (new)</b>	RedR	CEO
<b>Ian Smith (new)</b>	United States Connect	Founder & Managing Director

<b>Michael Rogers (new)</b>	Australian Food and Grocery Council	Manager, Agribusiness Forum
<b>James Hogan (new)</b>	HSBC Australia	Country Head of Commercial Banking
<b>Matthew McKenzie (new)</b>	Sanitarium Health Food Company	Group Export Manager
<b>Stuart Charity (new)</b>	Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association	Executive Director
<b>Rob Fitzpatrick (new)</b>	National ICT Australia	Director of Infrastructure Transport & Logistics
<b>Michael Kilgariff (new)</b>	Australian Logistics Council	CEO

## What else does the ECA do for exporters and importers?

The Export Council of Australia is a not for profit organization, owned by it's members, which is the peak voice for Australia's SME exporters. Our goals are as follows.

- Equip Australian business with the skills and capabilities required to effectively and efficiently conduct profitable international trade- through the Australian Institute of Export
- Representations to and on behalf of exporters to appropriate government and industry bodies.
- Undertake research to identify and quantify the issues affecting the development of profitable international trade activity by Australian SME companies
- Interface with and provide support to sector specific associations and councils representing business engaged in international trade.
- Deliver activities which provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and knowledge, and rewards excellence in export

At the same time under the banner of the Australian Institute of Export, the council provides first class skills development programs for exporters, importers, service providers and especially those new to international trade who need the process demystified.

### Want to know more? Get in touch!

Call us on 02 8243 7400 or email us at [info@export.org.au](mailto:info@export.org.au). Please also visit our website: [www.export.org.au](http://www.export.org.au)