



Export Council of Australia

The Voice for Australia's Exporters

Trade Policy Election Event Puts Important Trade Issues Back into the Spotlight

Tuesday 7 June 2016

The Federal election campaign has been in motion for some time with its main focus on domestic policy issues. However, the Export Council of Australia (ECA), the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (The Chamber) and the ANZ Bank (ANZ) have successfully put trade and investment policy issues squarely back in the spotlight with the election event which took place earlier today.

The key stakeholders agree on the fundamental importance of trade and investment policy as the Australian economy transitions from one focussed on exports of iron ore and other raw materials, to one with a broader spread of trade interests, taking advantage of strong skills in other market sectors and the benefits conferred by the recently completed and implemented "North Asia" FTAs with Korea, Japan and China.

The event was held in Sydney before an audience of more than 200 and telecast live to a viewing audience through Sky TV, all of which reflects the significant level of interest in the issue of trade and investment and the policies of the Coalition and the ALP.

The event was hosted by the ECA and The Chamber, and sponsored by the ANZ. In attendance were the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, the incumbent Trade Minister, and Senator Penny Wong, the Shadow Trade Minister. Both the Trade Minister and Shadow Trade Minister delivered presentations, after which they were joined in a panel discussion by Joanne Masters from the ANZ, Megan Motto from Consult Australia, and Marcus Moufarrige, of Servcorp.

The panel responded to a series of questions from the audience and to questions which had been submitted in advance. The event gave an opportunity to the Trade Minister to provide more detail on the Coalition trade policy going into the election and to the ALP to address its proposed trade policy.

CEO of the ECA, Lisa McAuley said that the event presented a unique opportunity for both parties to elaborate on their trade policies, an opportunity which had arisen from the extensive policy work done by the ECA and The Chamber.

"The ECA has always committed significant resources to its work in trade and investment policy which includes its Trade Policy Recommendations in each of the last three years, and detailed studies such as the Australia's International Business Survey conducted, in conjunction with Austrade, Efic and University of Sydney, and studies into Australia's trade relationships with Mexico, Korea and China. We will shortly also be launching studies on Iran and ASEAN. We are also proud of our collaboration with the ANZ on developing an FTA Tool (www.ftatool.com.au) which provides exporters with ready access to vital information on our FTAs."

"Today's event enabled us to bring together the relevant members of the political parties and listen to them express their future aims as well as answer some important questions. There were some significant revelations including:

"We must grow opportunities for our services exporters."- Hon Steven Ciobo MP

"Opening up trade means opportunities for jobs and growth."- Hon Steven Ciobo MP

"Government needs to tackle the barriers exporters face both at home and in international markets."- Senator the Hon Penny Wong

"Market access is paramount and trade barriers exist not only at the border."- Senator the Hon Penny Wong



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"We need to get over our fear of exporting, wake up and look at the opportunities in Asia"- Marcus Moufarrige, Chief Operating Officer, Servcorp

"Australia needs to be recognised internationally under one brand."- Lisa McAuley, CEO- ECA

"Differences in culture is one of the biggest barriers for exporters to overcome."- Joanne Masters, Senior Economist- ANZ

"The future of Australia is based on the success of SMEs and SME exporters."- Lisa McAuley, CEO- ECA

"We were delighted to have been able to deliver this event together with The Chamber and the ANZ and we look forward to continuing our work in support of Australian international businesses," Ms McAuley said.

For further information on the ECA's Trade Policy election recommendations please go to: www.export.org.au

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