



## **SENATOR THE HON SIMON BIRMINGHAM**

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment  
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate  
Senator for South Australia

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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#### **Australia and Singapore enhance digital trade ties**

Australia and Singapore have today concluded negotiations on a landmark Digital Economy Agreement that will further boost trade opportunities with our largest two-way trading partner in South-East Asia.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Simon Birmingham said that although the current circumstances were placing immense pressure on trade-exposed businesses, the Agreement would ultimately help to expand the scope of our economic engagement with Singapore and provide new opportunities for businesses and consumers operating in the digital economy.

"These are tough times for many businesses, but when the COVID-19 crisis passes, this Agreement will help to boost opportunities for Australian businesses to reach more customers and further tap into the Singaporean market," Minister Birmingham said.

"Singapore's digital economy has been growing rapidly and this will make it easier for Australian businesses to connect with the rising number of Singaporean businesses and consumers now engaged in cross-border digital commerce.

"It will deliver practical improvements to lower the costs and increase the efficiency of doing business, including in areas of personal data protection, paperless customs procedures, and electronic certification for agricultural exports.

"By outlining new rules of engagement, cross-border e-invoicing and e-payments will be easier, whilst at the same time better protecting personal information and consumer rights.

"The Agreement builds on Australia and Singapore's leading roles in negotiating new international rules on e-commerce in the World Trade Organization to better facilitate the growing volumes of digital trade across the globe."

The text of the Agreement will now undergo legal processes before signature and publication later this year.

Minister Birmingham and Singapore's Minister for Communications and Information and Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations S. Iswaran also signed two Memoranda of Understanding on government cooperation in artificial intelligence and the innovative use of data.

A summary of the key outcomes of the agreement and seven new agency-level MoUs covering cooperation on digital economy issues are available at: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/services-and-digital-trade/Pages/australia-and-singapore-digital-economy-agreement>.

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*Authorised by Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, South Australia.*