



SENATOR THE HON SIMON BIRMINGHAM

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

THE HON ANDREW GEE MP

Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education
Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment
Federal Member for Calare

MEDIA RELEASE

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Enhanced transparency for free trade agreement negotiations

The Morrison Government has today announced it will establish a Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) to help inform the Government's ongoing free trade agreement (FTA) agenda.

Federal Trade Minister Simon Birmingham said the MAC would form an important part of the Morrison Government's commitment to enhancing transparency around FTA negotiations.

"This forum brings together a broad cross-section of business, industry and community representatives with trade expertise to help inform Australia's negotiations and policies going forward," Minister Birmingham said.

"Our commitment to free trade and open markets continues to play a major role in our strong position that has seen Australia record 28 consecutive monthly trade surplus in a row.

"With our free trade agreement negotiations with the UK starting today, and our ongoing negotiations with the EU, this forum will provide an important opportunity to hear the views of experts from industry and consumer groups.

"The MAC will also build on existing consultative processes for our FTA's which includes ongoing stakeholder engagement programs, complementing the important work of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties."

Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education, and Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Gee said the establishment of the MAC would help inform the Government's work to deliver free trade agreements for Australian farmers and businesses.

"The Government has a strong record of delivering high-quality FTAs that drive export opportunities, economic prosperity and job creation, especially in country Australia. This is a record we are proud of and want to continue to see grow," Minister Gee said.

"In these challenging times, it is critical that Australian exporters, especially those impacted by the recent drought and bushfires, take full advantage of the opportunities available under these FTAs. At the same time, we must draw upon our business community and their diverse perspectives.

“The MAC will provide a mechanism that enables us to build upon and strengthen our engagement with a range of businesses and community leaders, stretching from the cities to our country towns, to ensure that all Australians no matter where they live benefit from our growing FTA agenda,” Minister Gee said.

Minister Birmingham and Ms Christine Holgate will co-chair the Committee. The first meeting will be held next month and it’s expected the Committee will convene at least twice a year.

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Authorised by Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, South Australia.

MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (MAC) MEMBERS

Name	Title, Organisation
Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham	Federal Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment
The Hon Andrew Gee MP	Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment
Mr Tony Battaglene	Chief Executive, Australian Grape and Wine
Ms Laura Berry	Chief Executive Officer, Supply Nation
Mr James Bond	President, Australian Services Roundtable
Mr Gerard Brody	Chair, Consumers' Federation of Australia
Ms Kate Carnell, AO	Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman
Ms Tania Constable, PSM	Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia
Prof. Andrew Conway, FIPA FFA	Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Public Accountants
Ms Bridget Fair, GAICD	Chief Executive Officer, Free TV Australia
Mr Scott Farrell	Partner, King & Wood Mallesons
Mr Kevin Gallagher	Chair, Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association
Ms Christine Holgate	Group CEO and Managing Director, Australia Post
Ms Veronica Papacosta	Acting Chief Executive Officer, Seafood Industry Australia
Mrs Fiona Simson	President, National Farmers Federation
Mr Andrew Stoler	International Trade Consultant
Mr Jason Strong	Managing Director, Meat and Livestock Australia
Ms Jacqui Walshe BBS, MBA, GAICD	Deputy Chair, Australian Tourism Export Council
Mr Dan Walton	National Secretary, The Australian Workers' Union
Prof. Paul Wellings, CBE	Vice Chancellor, University of Wollongong