



Export Council of Australia

The Voice for Australia's Exporters

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BUDGET CUTS MAY STUNT AUSTRALIA'S GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

International trade is a key driver for Australia's future economic growth and must be supported by Government if we want to take full advantage of the recently negotiated trade agreements. Our competitors are ramping up to take advantage of global opportunities and this could be of great detriment to our future growth says Export Council of Australia.

Over the last few years we've witnessed Austrade being continually downsized while competitors like USA, Canada and the UK are driving export activity right from the very top.

Chairman for the Export Council of Australia Ian Murray says the government needs to stop slashing income producing government agencies and target the ones that slow the pace of business by inventing unnecessary regulation and red tape.

"We need to drive export activity from our end otherwise all the hard work negotiating the trade agreements is lost. In the United Kingdom the Trade budget rose more than \$10 million in 2012-2013, while in the United States increasing access to export financing was one of the eight priorities outlined in Obama's National Export Initiative.

"Between 2010 and 2011 the value of exports supported by US trade promotion agencies rose from USD 6.35 billion in 2010 to USD 20.3 billion in 2011, a 211% increase.

"The future of successful Australian export lies in encouraging Australian companies to spend on R&D and innovation while providing effective mechanisms, like a well funded Austrade, to drive foreign investment and market access.

"In the coming year's jobs will be a major focus for government in Australia. If we get it right and invest in the things the growing Asian middle class wants, government won't need to worry, because the jobs will flow," Mr Murray said.

For a number of years the Export Council of Australia have been strong advocates for competitiveness beginning at home and believe establishing the National Industry Investment and Competitiveness agenda is the key to building export growth, which will build jobs and provide the funds for further innovation.

"We also commend the Government for the \$200 million capital injection into EFIC given the need to have a truly competitive export credit agency in Australia and feel the additional \$50 million for the Export Market Development Grant will help encourage innovative manufacturers to get out there and drive their export activity," My Murray said.

For interviews please contact:

Richelle Ward | Export Council of Australia | richelleward@export.org.au or 0414 290 526.