



# Export Council of Australia

The Voice for Australia's Exporters

## TRADE & INVESTMENT TOP PRIORITY IN THIS YEARS BUDGET

The Export Council of Australia (ECA) applauds the range of connected measures introduced in the 2015 Budget that will help Australian companies take advantage of trade agreements and facilitate new international business opportunities.

In recent years the ECA has been persistent in advocating on behalf of exporters and is pleased to now report progress across a number of trade and investment related issues that will ultimately work in their favour.

CEO of the Export Council of Australia Lisa McAuley says Australia needs to be stepping on the accelerator, not the brake, in terms of investment in trade. For years we have called for measures to improve the position of Australian businesses competing in the global market place.

“Last week we asked the question as to whether the government will put trade as a key priority in this year's budget and the answer is **yes!**” Ms McAuley said

Research recently conducted by the ECA reveals that some of our key international competitors, have since the Global Financial Crisis, invested in trade development and improving their business environment to spur economic growth. It is imperative that Australia does the same.

With 1 in 5 jobs related to trade, now is the time for Australia to invest in encouraging innovation, creating a competitive business environment, and fostering opportunities for international growth.

The ECA will be launching the results of a study that involved a review of trade promotion services across ten select countries. The Advancing Trade Development report will be launched in July and provides a strong case for the need to invest in trade promotion.

In ECA's 2014/2015 Trade Policy Recommendations, the ECA called for:

- 1) **Improving competitiveness through regulatory reform and trade facilitation:** Unnecessary regulation needs to be cut so we can improve the movement of goods across borders.
- 2) **Building infrastructure and supply chain efficiencies:** Australia's infrastructure must keep pace with growing demand.
- 3) **Enhancing Investment:** Investment is critical to Australia's growth and we face tough competition.
- 4) **Supporting Innovation:** Innovation is the way of the future for advanced economies. We need to lift our game.
- 5) **Advancing Trade Development:** Australia needs to be stepping on the accelerator, not the brake, in terms of investment in trade.
- 6) **Leveraging Free Trade Agreements:** We have them, now we need to work on utilising them.

“This year's budget is a win for trade and investment, with significant investment being driven to support all the six ECA's recommendations,” Ms McAuley said.

### For interviews please contact

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**About the Export Council of Australia** The Export Council of Australia is the peak Industry body for the Australian export community. The ECA is the next exciting step in the evolution of the Australian Institute of Export (AIE) which, for over 50 years, has had the interests of Australian exporters at heart.