



# Export Council of Australia

The Voice for Australia's Exporters

## **THE VOICE OF EXPORTING RELEASES TRADE POLICY RECOMENDATIONS - CALLING FOR GOVERNMENT TO DO MORE**

**Monday 10 November 2014**

Increasing trade and investment is absolutely crucial to unlocking Australia's future economic growth and our Government must do more to facilitate and promote trade as Australia continues to lag behind its international competitors says the Export Council of Australia (ECA).

The Export Council of Australia today released its second annual Trade Policy Recommendations (TPR) to Government. The ECA hopes the 2014/15 TPR will help emphasise the need for a **stronger, more competitive economy that enables growth**, for which trade and investment are crucial.

With the G20 looming, the ECA aims to demonstrate **where and how policy makers can leverage the G20 summit** in Brisbane in November 2014 and implement the recommendations.

While ECA applauds the Government's work in advancing Australia's trade agenda over the past year, the 2014/15 TPR seek to highlight the **policy settings needed to improve efficiencies and promote trade and investment** in Australia.

The ECA is urgently calling on Government at all levels to focus on six core issues, which, if implemented, will help improve Australia's competitiveness and increase trade and investment flows:

- 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.

Built on the ECA's last Trade Policy document, the 2014/15 TPR are intended to benefit Australian importers and exporters of all sizes and across all industry sectors, with a particular focus on the SME sector.



Director of the Export Council of Australia and Chair of its Trade Policy Committee, Andrew Hudson says more can and should be done to foster sustainable economic growth in Australia, and trade and investment play a crucial part in that. Companies engaged in international trade are generally more innovative, experience faster growth, create more jobs and bring more income into the country.

Chief Operations Officer of the Export Council of Australia, Lisa McAuley says that in Australia we punch below our weight when it comes to trade. While we are the 12<sup>th</sup> largest economy, we are only the 21<sup>st</sup> largest trader.

“There has been much discussion and debate of late about Australia’s competitiveness problem and where the government should be focusing its resources, while it might not be at the top of the agenda, trade is a big part of the solution.”

“The ECA is, and will continue to be, a strong advocate for greater investment in trade facilitation and promotion, as well as for targeted action in trade enabling sectors, as ultimately, increasing trade will lead to a more prosperous Australia,” Ms McAuley said.

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