



Export Council of Australia

The Voice for Australia's Exporters

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Export Council of Australia launches online Free Trade Agreement Tool with ANZ

The Export Council of Australia (ECA) and ANZ have today launched a website for Australian exporters, that simplifies the use of the 10 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) signed between Australia and other nations.

The new "FTA Tool" (www.ftatool.com.au) is designed to help Australian exporters navigate the basics of Australia's FTAs quickly and easily. It also provides valuable information on doing international business, links to a range of resources and handy video tutorials on a variety of topics, including the Harmonised Code system and applying for certificates of origin.

"Trade is a key driver of jobs, innovation and long term prosperity for Australia and FTAs, by helping to secure preferential access to the markets of key trade partners, stimulate trade," said Lisa McAuley, CEO of the ECA. "There is significant potential to increase the utilisation of Australia's FTAs by placing greater emphasis on and investment in raising the overall awareness of their tangible and intangible benefits, particularly for SMEs."

APEC, the organisation for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, stated in their Boracay Action Agenda that extra effort must be made to enable micro and small enterprises to benefit from free trade, as they account for the overwhelming majority of businesses and employment in the APEC region, including Australia. The ECA believes that making FTAs accessible to all business, irrespective of size, is a step in the right direction.

While not intended to be a definitive guide, the FTA Tool website provides easy to understand information on the tariffs and non-tariff benefits that apply to a range of goods and services across most industry sectors, focusing on Australia's primary exports to particular markets. It can be searched by FTA/country or by industry, and information is also provided on benefits chiefly applicable to services exports.

McAuley states, "We have long known that there is a need to address the general lack of awareness about FTAs and knowledge about how to utilise an FTA, particularly within the SME exporter community. We realised that the lack of SME-friendly information on the benefits of FTAs and the tools to practically engage with FTAs was putting SMEs at a disadvantage. The FTA Tool site will go some way towards simplifying FTAs for SMEs and will serve as a gateway to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's proposed FTA Dashboard, slated for development later this year."

ANZ Managing Director of Corporate and Commercial Banking Mark Hand said: "Australia's FTAs provide enormous opportunities not only for our exporters, but also industries requiring international investment. Together with our recently launched \$3 billion Trade Lending Pledge and presence in 34 markets, ANZ is committed to supporting businesses realise the potential benefits offered by these agreements."

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