



Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham
Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment
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By email to: trade.minister@dfat.gov.au

5/6/2019

Recommendations to 2019 G20 Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Digital Economy

I write to you in my capacity as President of the Australian Services Roundtable (ASR) in the lead up to your participation in the G20 Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Digital Economy in Japan on 8-9 June 2019.

I draw your attention to the attached set of joint industry recommendations to G20 Ministers for promoting innovation, digital technologies and trade. These recommendations have been agreed by a group of leading services and technology based industry associations from around the world, including the Australian Services Roundtable, the peak industry voice in Australia for the trade and investment interests of the services sector.

The 14 specific recommendations focus on how best to achieve the following key business objectives:

- Facilitating the Free Flow of Data across Borders;
- Ensuring Trust in the Free Flow of Data;
- Enabling Adoption of Digital Technologies in the Workforce;
- Promoting Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emerging and Transformative Technology Practices that Foster Global Competitiveness;
- Opposing Measures Requiring Disclosure or Transfer of Technologies or other Sensitive Information;
- Supporting ongoing Work at the WTO; and
- Pursuing Multilateral Solutions on Digital Taxation and Avoiding New Tariffs.

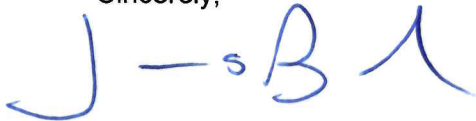
The ASR is working on all these issues with services industry counterparts - in our FTA partner countries, in APEC, in the G20 and in the WTO.

Of the 14 business recommendations set out in the joint industry statement, ASR attaches considerable importance at this *particular* juncture to recommendation 13: "Make permanent the WTO Moratorium on imposing customs duties on electronic transactions". We have today highlighted this same issue in a joint Asia Pacific Services Coalition letter to the Chair of APEC

Senior Officials (also attached), urging APEC pathfinder activity on this matter. We have commissioned joint economic research on this matter with other members of the Global Services Coalition, initial findings of which we will shortly share with your Department and perhaps release informally in the margins of the June round of WTO discussions on the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on E Commerce.

During the June round of the JSI, one of our members, the Institute for International Trade at the University of Adelaide is hosting a side event on Facilitating Trade in Services delivered via Electronic Transmission (flyer attached). Our members will take this early opportunity to examine and elaborate on the negative implications for international trade of inaction across all our priority areas – from consumer protection including data privacy, through cybersecurity to innovation-oriented regulatory best practice and international regulatory cooperation for interoperability. We aim to explore possible means of implementing many of the recommendations we make to G20 Ministers especially, at this early stage in the JSI discussions, recommendation 1: (refraining from data localisation).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J - s B A', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Angus Bond
Chair of the Board
Australian Services Roundtable