

## **RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAINS MAY DEPEND ON TRADE SINGLE WINDOW**

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Ongoing restrictions to contain Covid-19 and adverse competition between major trading economies are pushing Australian businesses to reconsider their global supply chain strategies.

As they contemplate alternative operational locations and new sources of supply, they are looking to Government for supportive policies and programs.

The Export Council of Australia therefore welcomes the 2020-21 Budget allocation of \$28.6 million to implement a simplified trade system.

This includes the establishment of a 'Trade Single Window', which will require streamlining of processes and interoperability of systems across agencies, and between the public and private sectors.

As the costs of trade increase, especially transport costs, trade facilitation initiatives become critical for Australian businesses engaged in international trade.

For small and medium sized exporters, especially those operating with thin margins, any reductions in costs would make a meaningful difference.

These initiatives will also help in the decision-making processes of firms reassessing their supply chains.

On top of the reduced paperwork, the technological and digital advancement may provide alternative approaches to managing logistics. It will provide confidence in the efficiency and integrity of systems and boost Australian competitiveness.

Moving forward, the leadership by Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, and Australian Border Force, will be crucial in ensuring there is a clear 'Team Australia' approach.

We encourage Government agencies to think less about why things can't be done and think more about potential innovative and strategic solutions. We encourage agencies to be flexible and seriously consider the views of industry.

In addition, we encourage the Government to reach out to key trading partners to identify coordinated action to secure supply chains. We understand this may in part be happening under the Australia-India-Japan Economic Ministers' forum.

We look forward to seeing progress on these various fronts, based on strong public-private dialogue and concerted effort.

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