

## House of Lords

### International Agreements Committee

#### Updated call for evidence

The House of Lords International Agreements Committee (IAC), chaired by Baroness Hayter, has re-opened its call for evidence into the UK-Australia trade agreement now that [the text of the signed agreement](#) has been published.

This is a public call for written evidence to be submitted to the Committee. We are inviting new submissions, as well as written evidence from those who have written to us previously, should they wish to make additional comments. Evidence received and accepted to date can be found on [the Committee's webpages](#).

The Committee's scrutiny of these negotiations is considering a wide range of issues, and we expect this call for evidence to remain open until the agreement is laid formally in Parliament under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act, but we would be grateful for submissions on one, some or all of the points set out below by 5pm on Thursday 3 February.

When preparing your response, please bear in mind that short, concise responses are preferred, which must not be any longer than six sides of A4. Bullet points are acceptable. You do not need to address every question below. Equally, if there are any crucial issues not captured by the questions we pose, please highlight what they are and explain their salience.

The process for making submissions is set out in Annex 1, but if you have any questions or require any adjustments to enable you to respond, please contact the staff of the Committee at [HLIntlAgreements@parliament.uk](mailto:HLIntlAgreements@parliament.uk).

#### Background

The Government announced the signature of a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA) with Australia on 16 December 2021.

The International Agreements Committee is responsible for scrutinising how the Government negotiates international agreements, including trade treaties, and the final content of those agreements. A trade deal with Australia would be the first major new trade agreement agreed by a post-Brexit UK.

## Inquiry focus

The Committee is interested in submissions on any and all aspects of the UK-Australia trade agreement, but we are particularly keen to hear to what extent the Agreement meets the Government's stated negotiating objectives; how it will affect consumers and businesses; and the likely economic, social, environmental and other impacts.

The Committee seeks evidence on the following areas of interest, which are phrased as questions for the ease of respondents. Submissions need not address all questions.

## Areas of interest

We welcome broad responses to general questions, as well as specific responses in relation to one or more of the key themes set out below.

1. Does the free trade agreement signed between the UK and Australian Governments on 16 December 2021 deliver on UK interests, including those of the devolved nations? Does the FTA achieve the negotiating objectives set out by the Department for International Trade? What are the costs, benefits and key trade-offs?
2. How reliable do you find the Department for International Trade's (DIT) assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed agreement with Australia, either as set out in the impact assessment or elsewhere? In particular, the impact assessment indicates that "net GVA [gross value added] in Northern Ireland is estimated to see a small reduction overall". How do you evaluate this assessment?
3. What are the economic consequences for UK farmers and agri-food producers? To what extent do the tariff phase-out periods for certain agricultural imports from Australia and the bilateral safeguards for beef and sheepmeat in the signed agreement address the concerns of the UK agricultural sector? What opportunities are there for UK companies that might wish to export more to the Australia under a new deal?
4. The Government has said that the deal would support manufacturing jobs across the UK, particularly in the automotive sector. Does the signed agreement deliver on this objective and will it strengthen supply chains?
5. What assessment would you make of the commitments in the competition and consumer protection chapter? Are consumer interests sufficiently recognised in other chapters throughout the signed agreement?

6. How do you evaluate the provisions regarding the governance and implementation of the agreement? Do the working groups enable interested parties to engage in the implementation, including the devolved nations?
7. The UK Government aimed to increase opportunities for the UK professional services industry by supporting Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications and facilitating the temporary movement of business people between the UK and Australia. Based on the provisions in the signed agreement, to what extent does it meet this objective?
8. The UK Government stated in its negotiating objectives that it “will seek an ambitious agreement with Australia for financial services and will consider how to promote deeper co-operation on regulatory issues”. Will the signed agreement deliver this objective?
9. The Government has said that the Australian agreement will support the UK services industry through the digital provisions in the deal and bring opportunities to the UK. How would you assess this claim based on the digital provisions in the signed agreement?
10. What is your assessment of the investment chapter of the signed agreement?
11. The Government has said that the agreement with Australia would secure intellectual property rights that support UK creative industries and would protect the UK’s existing IP standards. Will the signed agreement deliver this objective?
12. How do you assess the commitments made on geographical indications in the signed agreement and side letter?
13. What is your assessment of the labour chapter of the signed agreement?
14. Is the environment chapter in the signed agreement sufficiently ambitious in its environmental protections and support for trade in environmental goods and services? Are there other provisions which could have beneficially been included in this chapter, and is this a good model for environmental chapters in future FTAs?
15. Does the signed agreement adequately address climate change and take into account the relative carbon intensities of Australian and UK industries and agriculture?
16. What is your assessment of the procurement chapter of the signed agreement?
17. In your view, could the deal, and in particular the SPS provisions, have an impact on the operation of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol and, if so, how?
18. The UK Government has presented an FTA with Australia as a “gateway” to joining to the Comprehensive and Progressive

Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). To what extent will the bilateral FTA with Australia help the UK join CPTPP?

19. What effect could the UK-Australia trade deal have on the UK's future ability to negotiate deals with other countries, and to what extent does it set a precedent for future negotiations?

## ANNEX 1: GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Written submissions should be made online by clicking the “Start” button below.

We would be grateful for submissions by 5pm on Thursday 3 February.

For any questions, please contact the Committee staff at [HLIntlAgreements@parliament.uk](mailto:HLIntlAgreements@parliament.uk) or by telephoning 020 7219 4840.

Short submissions are preferred. A submission longer than six pages should include a one-page summary.

Paragraphs should be numbered. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Evidence that is accepted by the Committee may be published online at any stage; when it is so published it becomes subject to parliamentary copyright and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Submissions that have been previously published will not be accepted as evidence.

Once you have received acknowledgement that the evidence has been accepted you will receive a further email, and at this point you may publicise or publish your evidence yourself. In doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee, and you should be aware that your publication or re-publication of your evidence may not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Personal contact details will be removed from evidence before publication but will be retained by the Committee Office and used for specific purposes relating to the Committee's work, for instance to seek additional information.

Substantive communications to the Committee about the inquiry should be addressed through the clerk of the Committee, whether or not they are intended to constitute formal evidence to the Committee.

You can follow the progress of the inquiry at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/458/ukaustralia-trade-negotiations/>

