

# **PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW**



# FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

## Ministers and portfolio responsibilities

The four portfolio ministers are the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, and the Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, the Hon Keith Pitt MP.

The portfolio consists of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade), the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Tourism Australia and the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (Efic).

DFAT (the department) works with its portfolio partners to advance Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests. In support of this, the department utilises its Canberra-based workforce, state and territory offices and overseas missions to promote a stable and prosperous regional and global environment by deepening our engagement with bilateral and regional partners and multilateral institutions.

The department is working to boost Australia's commercial opportunities abroad, and investment and employment prospects at home. In coordination with Austrade, Tourism Australia, Efic and ACIAR, DFAT implements the government's economic diplomacy agenda by opening markets for Australian exports, promoting productive foreign investment to Australia, advancing Australian commercial interests, strengthening the global trading system, and promoting open markets and economic integration, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

The department delivers an innovative aid program, centred on the Indo-Pacific region, which contributes to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and regional stability. DFAT leads the government's response to international crises, including humanitarian emergencies in the Indo-Pacific region.

By broadening international understanding in Australia and globally of the government's international priorities, policies and programs, the department enhances Australia's influence and reputation on the international stage.

The department also works to strengthen international frameworks and norms that promote Australian values – such as human rights, gender equality, democratic principles and the rule of law, international security, and open and transparent global markets.

### *Portfolio overview*

The protection and welfare of Australians abroad remains a core departmental objective. This is achieved by providing effective and courteous consular services to Australians overseas, as well as a secure, efficient and responsive passport service. In specific locations, Austrade helps to deliver consular and passport services. In addition, the department provides quality protocol services to the diplomatic and consular corps accredited to Australia.

The department also continues to focus on the security of the Australian government presence overseas. This is achieved through ongoing efforts to protect our people, keep government information and communications secure, and to effectively manage Australia's global property assets.

Austrade contributes to Australia's economic prosperity by promoting Australia's international trade, investment and education interests, and providing advice to government on tourism policy. Austrade has a particular focus on growth and emerging markets, including those in Asia that offer commercial potential and provide opportunities aligned with Australia's comparative advantage. Within these markets, there is a clear role for Austrade as a Government agency to support Australian businesses and education institutions. Austrade, with DFAT, also promotes the opportunities created by free trade agreements, and helps educate business on how to use free trade agreements to access new markets and grow their business.

Austrade collaborates with state and territory governments and other Commonwealth Government agencies to attract productive foreign direct investment in priority sectors. Austrade also promotes Australia as a preferred education destination and provider of education services, administers several grant programs and helps implement *Australian International Education 2025*, a road map for the sector. Austrade implements the government's tourism policy, *Tourism 2020*, and works on tourism policy, projects, programs and research to strengthen Australia's tourism industry and grow Australia's tourism market share.

Tourism Australia promotes Australia as a compelling tourism destination for international leisure and business events visitors. Tourism Australia focuses its marketing on consumers in those international markets with the greatest growth potential for Australia. The agency will continue to work in partnership with state and territory tourism organisations, industry and commercial partners to increase the economic benefits of tourism to Australia by building demand and increasing visitation and visitor spending.

DFAT will work closely with Austrade, Tourism Australia and other Commonwealth Government agencies to advance Australia's *Tourism 2020* domestic reform priorities. The department will continue to strengthen bilateral tourism relationships with major source countries and participate in key multilateral tourism forums.

Through ASIS, the portfolio will continue to enhance government understanding of the overseas environment affecting Australia's vital interests and take appropriate action, consistent with applicable legislation, to protect identified interests.

ACIAR supports Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction and enhanced regional stability, with a particular focus on economic and scientific diplomacy, healthier and better-nourished families, and women's economic empowerment.

ACIAR contributes to food security, food system resilience, poverty reduction and improved livelihoods, through more productive and sustainable farming systems emerging from collaborative international research. Its mandate is to amplify the impact of Australia's outstanding capabilities in agricultural science by brokering and funding agricultural research for development partnerships in developing countries. The agency works with public and private research institutions to improve the productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems and the resilience of food systems in partner countries.

ACIAR's work aligns closely with Australia's aid program, supporting research collaboration while emphasising human capital building and private sector-led development, targeted at safer and more inclusive agrifood value chains and improved livelihoods in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Efic helps Australian companies exporting and investing overseas to gain access to finance and insurance services. Efic provides financial facilities for exporters, including loans, guarantees, bonds and political risk insurance, with a focus on small and medium enterprises and those seeking to do business in emerging markets. Efic will continue to work closely with DFAT and Austrade in the delivery of these services. It will also continue to manage the National Interest Account on behalf of the Commonwealth.

For information on resourcing across the portfolio, please refer to Part 1: Agency Financial Resourcing in Budget Paper No. 4: Agency Resourcing.

**Figure 1: Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio structure and outcomes**

