

# **PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW**



# FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

## Ministers and portfolio responsibilities

The four portfolio ministers are:

- the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs;
- the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment;
- Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific; and
- the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment.

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).

### **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

The Foreign Policy White Paper sets out a comprehensive framework for the portfolio – and broader Australian Government – to advance Australia’s security and prosperity in a contested and competitive world.

In support of this, DFAT works with its portfolio partners and utilises its Canberra-based workforce, state and territory offices and overseas missions to promote a stable and prosperous regional and global environment by deepening Australia’s engagement with bilateral and regional partners and multilateral institutions.

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

The portfolio works 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 Australian 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.

## *Portfolio overview*

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

DFAT delivers an innovative development assistance program, centred on the Indo-Pacific region, which contributes to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and regional stability. It also leads the Australian Government's response to international crises, including humanitarian emergencies in the Indo-Pacific region.

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 addition, DFAT provides quality protocol services to the diplomatic and consular corps accredited to Australia.

DFAT 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**

Austrade contributes to Australia's economic prosperity by promoting Australia's export sector and encouraging productive foreign direct investment into Australia. Austrade works with priority industry sectors to drive the sustained long-term growth of Australian exports. It aims to reduce the time, cost and risk for its clients by providing authoritative commercial insights and information to help them make informed business decisions. Austrade collaborates closely with state and territory governments and other government agencies, and informs and influences policy to support positive trade and investment outcomes.

Austrade, alongside DFAT, 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 also administers several grant programs, including the Export Market Development Grants scheme, and works on tourism policy, projects, programs and research to strengthen Australia's tourism industry and grow Australia's share of the international tourism market. In specific locations, Austrade also helps to deliver consular and passport services.

### **ACIAR**

ACIAR supports Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth, 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's mandate is to amplify the impact of

Australia's outstanding capabilities in agricultural science by brokering and investing in agricultural research partnerships in developing countries. ACIAR 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 objectives reflect Australia's aid policy and the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development through 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.

### **ASIS**

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.

### **Tourism Australia**

Tourism Australia is Australia's national tourism marketing organisation. It works to promote Australia internationally as a compelling tourism destination for leisure and business events travel. Tourism Australia's purpose is to grow demand and foster a competitive and sustainable Australian tourism industry through partnership marketing to targeted global consumers in key markets.

### **Efic**

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 Australian Government, including the Defence Export Facility, and where directed, provide support to other Australian Government entities.

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**

