

## News story: UK-Australia Trade Working Group joint statement

The Australia-UK Trade Working Group met in London on 25 and 26 July 2018. This was the group's fourth meeting since it was established in September 2016 by the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP, the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade and the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, Australia's Minister for Trade, Tourism, and Investment.

Delegations were led by officials from the UK's Department of International Trade (DIT) and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It was attended by representatives from a range of UK and Australian government departments.

Discussions continued to focus on the UK and Australia's future trade and investment relationship; a recognition of the shared ambition, after the UK leaves the European Union, to start bilateral FTA negotiations. Conversations built upon the previous Trade Working Groups, with officials continuing to develop a deep and shared understanding of each other's domestic systems and trade policy across a number of areas.

The Trade Working Group also provided an opportunity for the UK to set out the work under way to establish its independent trade policy. Officials discussed the recently announced UK consultations on future free trade agreements, of which Australia is one of 3 prospective bilateral deals where the public's views are sought.

Finally, the Working Group affirmed the UK and Australia's shared desire to promote and continue to champion free trade and a robust multilateral trading system.