



European Australian Business Council



## **2019 EABC Business Delegation to Canberra**

**Parliament House, Canberra**  
15-16 October 2019

## **Delegation Report**

## Overview

The Business Delegation to Canberra is a key part of the EABC's annual programme. The delegation provides an opportunity for senior Australian and European business representatives to engage in direct dialogue with members of the **Federal Government** and **Opposition** on the broad economic and business agenda, and other key developments occurring in the bilateral relationship with Europe, including ongoing negotiations for an Australia-EU Free Trade Agreement.



## Participants

EABC Members participating in the programme included senior representatives from a diverse range of companies, sectors and organisations. The delegation was led by EABC Deputy Chairs the **Hon Simon Crean** (Monash University) and **Dr Stephanie Fahey** (Austrade), and EABC CEO **Jason Collins**.

The list of delegates included **Natalie Bryce** (Herbert Smith Freehills), **Joshua Cooney** (Suncorp), **Judith Crompton** (Cover-More Group), **Dr Cameron Crouch** (BHP Billiton), **Matthew Deaner** (Screen Producers Australia), **Trevor Dixon** (Link Group), **David Epstein** (Vigot & Co), Professor **Dawn Freshwater** (University of Western Australia), **Justin Howden** (H&H Group), **Bruce Hunter** (McKinsey & Company), **Gavin Jackman** (Antinomies Advisory), **Dr Alex Joiner** (IFM Investors), **Andrew Low** (AJ Capital & Investments), **John Lydon** (McKinsey & Company), **Andrew McCallum** (Meat & Livestock Australia), **Kevin McCann AM** (Citadel Group), **Sue Morphet** (Chief Executive Women), **Kate O'Loughlin** (QBE Australia & New Zealand), HE **Dr Michael Pulch** (Delegation of the European Union to Australia), **Emilio Romeo** (Ericsson), **Nicholas Scofield** (Allianz Australia), **Helen Seidel** (Visa), **Philip Skinner** (Caltex Australia), **Vicki Thomson** (The Group of Eight), and **Peter van Dongen** (PwC Australia).

## About the EABC

The European Australian Business Council (EABC) is a peak business organisation whose mission is to promote trade, investment and institutional cooperation between Australia and Europe. The EABC plays a key role in fostering dialogue between business and government leaders from Australia, the European Union and its Member States, on ways to enhance the economic relationship bilaterally.

As an independent, private sector-led initiative, the EABC also works with Australian and European diplomatic missions and trade agencies, international organisations, as well as bilateral chambers and other peak business associations.

Europe as a whole represents Australia's most significant economic partner overall with annual two-way trade of \$A110 billion, and total two-way investment totalling \$A1.9 trillion. Europe is also an expanding market of over 500 million consumers for Australian services exports and investment.

The EABC has long-championed a more ambitious economic framework to further enhance this relationship, and welcomed the formal launch of negotiations for a comprehensive and mutually beneficial **Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the European Union**.

As a central part of our annual programme, the EABC also undertakes an annual Business Mission to Europe to meet with European leaders and discuss key economic and policy developments in Europe and encourage stronger bilateral relations. This year, the delegation visited Berlin, Frankfurt, Brussels, Copenhagen, Malmö and London, with the leadership of Minister for Finance **Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann** in Germany.

Our delegation which travelled to Europe gathered together over thirty senior business leaders for meetings with European Government, Ministers, Central Bankers, Members of the European Parliament, Vice-Presidents, and Commissioners of the European Commission, peak business organisations, innovation agencies, and other stakeholders.

## Programme

The programme began with a Cocktail Reception in the Dame Dorothy Tangney Alcove where delegates were joined by distinguished guests including Members and Senators, Ambassadors, and senior officials. With the fifth round of FTA negotiations being held in Canberra that same week, we were particularly pleased to welcome the Chief EU-Australia FTA Negotiators - EU Deputy Director General for Trade, **Helena König** and from DFAT, **Alison Burrows**, along with the EU Ambassador to Australia, **Dr Michael Pulch**.



Delegates then met with the **Hon Dan Tehan MP**, Minister for Education, for a roundtable discussion. Minister Tehan outlined the Government's reform of the high-education system following the Wellings Report, and the transition to a performance-based system. The Government will focus on fostering industry-research collaboration and look at successful European models, in particular joint programmes between universities and technical colleges. Discussion topics included enhancing R&D collaboration with Europe through the Horizon Europe programme and the Australia-EU FTA, of which mutual recognition of qualifications is a crucial aspect.



The delegation was joined for a working dinner with Guest of Honour the **Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP**. The Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Resources outlined the recent changes within the Labor Party and underlined Labor's continuing support for the Australia-EU FTA. He went on to delineate the challenges facing Australia's agriculture sector in the domestic market, and the need for reforms. Discussion with participants included food security, Australia's mining sector, energy transition in Australia and the role for hydrogen, water entitlements regimes in Australia, the methodology for calculating Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, and climate policy in Australia.



The EABC delegation programme continued on Wednesday 16 October with a roundtable discussion with the **Hon Stuart Robert MP**, Minister for the NDIS and Minister for Government Services. Minister Robert emphasised the Government's focus on service delivery, with all services placed into one portfolio represented at Cabinet level to allow cross-portfolio and cross-agency reform. He commented on the Government's objective to streamline digital services, with a single app and website, and remove data sharing obstacles between government services. He emphasised the importance of coordination with the States, and collaboration with business, and commented on the drafting of the new national disability strategy for beyond 2020.



EABC Delegates then met with **Madeleine King MP**, Shadow Minister for Trade, who underlined Labor's support for free, fair and open trade as an important pillar of the Australian economy. She emphasised the need for Australia to lead multilateral efforts to preserve a rules-based trading system and ensure the functioning of the WTO's Appellate Body. She stressed the importance, in this time of surging global protectionism, of making the case for trade and foreign investment liberalisation which has greatly contributed to Australia's prosperity over the past decades. Discussion with participants included ISDS and labour market testing clauses in FTAs, the need in Australia for high-skilled migration, and strong standards and high-quality of products serving as a crucial selling point for Australian and European businesses.



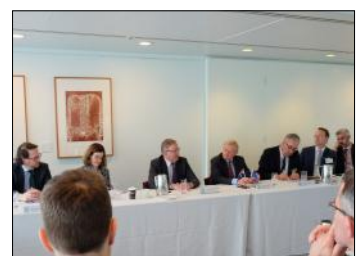
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The delegation was joined next by the **Hon Paul Fletcher MP**, Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts. The Minister detailed the progress made thus far in rolling out the NBN and the Government's efforts to ensure that this \$49 billion investment delivers in terms of productivity gains, efficiency, and other economic and social advantages across all sectors. Minister Fletcher identified cyber security as a key Government priority, outlining initiatives to keep the Internet under the rule-of-law and mitigate any potential negative impact on the economy. Discussion included the recently created office of eSafety Commissioner; the Government's response to the ACCC inquiry into the impact of digital platforms on media; the Government's working relationships with the online platforms and the Parliamentary 5G inquiry.

The roundtable discussion with **Dr Jim Chalmers MP** began with the Shadow Treasurer commenting on the IMF forecast, which downgrades Australia's economic growth to 1.7%. The Shadow Treasurer acknowledged the troubling global conditions, but emphasised the many domestic challenges faced by Australia, including low consumption, high household debt, slow wage growth, slow productivity growth, and low business investment. Dr Chalmers discussed the Government's economic policy and made the case for fiscal stimulus and emphasised the need to accelerate productivity enhancing infrastructure investment in particular, while staying within the budget surplus and maintaining efforts for fiscal repair. Discussion with participants included Labor's discussion paper on growth; productivity reforms in Australia; the RBA rate cuts and reaction from the Big Four banks; female participation in the workforce; the new banking inquiry; and the structure of boards in Australia.

**Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann**, Minister for Finance, commented on the global context with an unprecedented number of political and economic tensions around the globe, generating uncertainty and volatility and creating downward pressure on growth. He outlined the Government's growth strategy, based in particular on \$100 billion in infrastructure spending, \$158 billion in tax cuts, and an ambitious trade agenda. The Minister highlighted the extensive network of FTAs concluded by the Coalition, now covering over 70% of Australia's trade and aiming to reach 90% with the conclusion of FTAs with India and the EU. The discussion covered topics including the importance of a reliable energy policy framework to enhance the international competitiveness of Australian businesses; Australia's constructive relations with the US and China; Double Taxation Agreements with European countries; the EU's new leadership team; and a range of other topics.

Labor Leader the **Hon Anthony Albanese MP** underscored the role of European investment in Australia, and the contribution of European companies in building infrastructure capacities in the country. Mr Albanese stressed the importance for Australia of trade diversification, continued commitment to preserving the multilateral rules-based system, and the great opportunities behind an ambitious FTA with the EU. He outlined the changes to the nature of jobs and the social and economic consequences brought by automation including investment opportunities and the creation of higher-end, skilled jobs in Australia. Mr Albanese highlighted Labor's commitment to future proofing the workforce and economy and the importance of engaging with business on solutions to shape the change so that it benefits all Australians.



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**The Hon Peter Dutton MP** outlined his portfolio priorities and the crucial role that the Department of Home Affairs plays in bringing together Australia's federal law enforcement, national and transport security (including ASIO), criminal justice, emergency management, multicultural affairs and immigration, and border-related functions and agencies. As part of the discussion, participants addressed the importance for European companies of facilitating skilled migration; 5G and cyber security of critical infrastructure; and collaboration with agencies including the ASD and ASIO.



The delegation was joined for a working lunch by **Philip Gaetjens**, Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Secretary outlined the Government's ambitious trade agenda over the past decade and highlighted the importance of cooperating with the EU to conclude a comprehensive FTA and to revitalise the WTO. Discussion with participants included the Government's energy policy and objective to ensure reliable and less costly energy for consumers, with a focus on limiting anticompetitive behaviours. Australia's innovation policy, the APS review, the future of work, and service delivery were also discussed.



Minister for the Environment, the **Hon Sussan Ley MP**, underlined Australia's global leadership in many environmental areas, including environmental management, conservation legislation, and commitment to implementing best practices. The Minister discussed the Government's waste policy including a \$167 million Recycling Investment plan, while looking at successful European models of waste-to-energy, with Germany regarded as a gold standard in this sector. Discussion with participants also included Australia's leadership in the International Partnership for Blue Carbon; circular economy in Australia; and the review of the 1999 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.



The **Hon Angus Taylor MP** first commented on the economic and political pressures specific to the energy portfolio. In this difficult context, the Minister outlined his portfolio priorities around emission reduction, competition policy, and energy supply and the Government's implementation of its \$3.5 billion Climate Solutions Package. The Minister explained that the surge of intermittent renewables seen in Australia is increasing the need to invest in dispatchable generation, with pumped hydro and gas as favoured options. He explained that other technologies are also being looked at by Government, in particular to decrease emissions further post-2030, including hydrogen, CCS, biofuels, and others.



The Mission to Canberra concluded with a last meeting with Agriculture Minister, **Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie**, who underlined the Government's ambitions in the FTA with the EU, in particular in terms of market access for agri-food products. She outlined some of the key sensitivities on both sides, while stressing the importance to look at opportunities. The EU-FTA could open up a market of over 500 million consumers and a \$17 trillion economy to Australian farmers. The Minister also commented on the process launched with the industry following the publication in August of the list of Geographical Indications (GIs) that the EU proposes to protect under the FTA. The publication of the list is a major milestone in the process towards a final deal and has opened the door to the market access phase of the negotiations.



## Delegation Profiles



### **The Hon Simon Crean (EABC Deputy Chair)**

Member, Monash University Council; Chair, Australian Livestock Exporters Council; Director, Linfox; *former Leader of the Opposition; former Minister for Trade; for Education; for Employment and Workplace Relations*



### **Dr Stephanie Fahey (EABC Deputy Chair)**

CEO, Austrade; Director, Australia's National Brand Advisory Council; Director, Australia Japan Business Co-operation Committee, *former Lead Partner (Education in Oceania), Ernst & Young; former Deputy Vice Chancellor, Monash University*



### **Natalie Bryce (EABC Corporate Member)**

Partner (Sector Lead for Healthcare; Relationship Partner for Commonwealth Government), Herbert Smith Freehills



### **Joshua Cooney (EABC Corporate Member)**

Executive Manager Government, Industry & Public Policy, Suncorp; *former Deputy Chief of Staff, Australian Office of Minister for Child Care and Employment Participation; former Chief of Staff, Queensland Office of the Minister for Environment*



### **Judith Crompton (EABC Board Member)**

CEO, Asia Pacific, Cover-more Group; NSW Chair of the Australian British Chamber of Commerce; *former Chief Commercial Officer, Virgin Australia Holdings*



### **Dr Cameron Crouch (EABC Corporate Member)**

Principal Public Policy and Geopolitics, BHP Billiton; *former Public Policy Consultant, Ernst & Young and PwC Australia*



### **Matthew Deaner (EABC Corporate Member)**

CEO, Screen Producers Australia; Trustee, Media Super



### **Trevor Dixon (EABC Corporate Member)**

Chief Strategic and International Officer, Link Group; Graduate Member, AICD; Fellow, Governance Institute of Australia; *former Senior Executive - Westpac Banking Corporation, GIO, BPAY Group*



### **David Epstein (EABC Board Member)**

Principal, Vigot & Co; Chair, Communications Compliance Ltd; Adjunct Professor, Deakin Business School; Governing Member, auDA; Graduate Member, AICD; *former Senior*



### **Professor Dawn Freshwater (EABC Corporate Member)**

Vice-Chancellor, The University of Western Australia; Chair, The Group of Eight (Universities); Vice-Chair, Worldwide Universities Network; Director, Harris Perkins Institute of Medical Research



### **Justin Howden (EABC Board Member)**

Group Head, Global Government Affairs and Industry Development, H&H Group; Director, Complementary Medicines Australia; *former National President, Australia Malaysia Business Council, Australia Philippines Business Council; founding Board member, Swinburne Ventures*



### **Bruce Hunter (EABC Corporate Member)**

Partner (Public and Social Sector Practice; Canberra Lead), McKinsey & Company



### **Gavin Jackman (EABC Board Member)**

Principal, Antinomies Advisory; *former Executive Global Head, Orica; former Group Executive Public Affairs, Santos; former Director of Government Affairs, BP Australia; former Senior Advisor, Office of Prime Minister the Hon John Howard MP*



### **Dr Alex Joiner (EABC Corporate Member)**

Chief Economist, IFM Investors; Member - IFM Investment Committee; Australian Business Economists; Principles for Responsible Investment Macroeconomic Risks Advisory Group; *former Chief Economist, Bank of America Merrill Lynch for Australia and New Zealand; former Senior Economist, ANZ Bank*

## Delegation Profiles



### **Andrew Low (EABC Board Member)**

Executive Director, AJ Capital & Investments; Director, Bell Shakespeare Company; Fellow, AICD, Financial Services Institute of Australasia; *former Chairman CITIC CLSA Australia*



### **John Lydon (EABC Board Member)**

Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company; Member, University of Technology Sydney's Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Board; Founding Member, Male Champions of Change



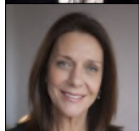
### **Andrew McCallum (EABC Board Member)**

Global Manager Trade & Market Access, Meat & Livestock Australia; *former General Manager, Solutions Marketing & Research; former Senior Research Officer, Australia Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics*



### **Kevin McCann AM (EABC Corporate Council)**

Chair- Citadel Group, Telix Pharmaceuticals Limited, Menzies Research Centre; Fellow, AICD; *Former Chair - Macquarie Group Limited, Macquarie Bank Limited, ING Management Limited, Healthscope Limited and Sydney Harbour Federation Trust*



### **Sue Morphet (EABC Corporate Council)**

President, CEW; Chair, National Tiles; Director, Noni B, Asaleo Care; *former CEO and Board Director, Pacific Brands; former Group General Manager, Bonds; former Director, Godfreys, Fisher and Paykel; former Chair, Manufacturing Australia*



### **Kate O'Loughlin (EABC Corporate Member)**

Head of Government Relations & Industry Affairs, QBE Australia & New Zealand; *former Company Secretary & Governance AUSPAC, QBE Group; former General Counsel and Company Secretary, QBE Lenders Mortgage Insurance Limited*



### **HE Dr Michael Pulch (EABC Board Member)**

Ambassador & Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to Australia; *former EU Ambassador to Singapore; former Head, Russia Division, European External Action Service; Deputy Chief of Mission, EU Delegation to China*



### **Emilio Romeo (EABC Board Member)**

Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director Australia & New Zealand, Ericsson; Board member, Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA); Chair AMTA Finance & Audit Committee; Graduate Member, AICD



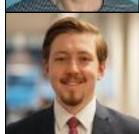
### **Nicholas Scofield (EABC Corporate Partner)**

Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Allianz Australia; *former Economic and Public Policy Consultant, The Allen Consulting Group; former Senior Economic Advisor, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet*



### **Helen Seidel (EABC Corporate Partner)**

Senior Director, Government Engagement, Australia, NZ and the South Pacific, Visa; *former Director, External Relations, McKinsey and Company Australia and NZ; former Director, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*



### **Philip Skinner (EABC Corporate Partner)**

Advisor, Government and Industry Affairs, Caltex Australia; *former Government Affairs Advisor, Australasian Convenience and Petroleum Marketers Association*



### **Vicki Thomson (EABC Board Member)**

Chief Executive Officer, The Group of Eight (Universities); Member, Australian Government's New Colombo Plan Steering Group; *former Executive Director,*



### **Peter van Dongen (EABC Board Member)**

Chair, PwC Australia; Director, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children

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