

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**SECRETARY JAN ADAMS AO PSM
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE
OPENING STATEMENT
BUDGET ESTIMATES
MONDAY, 3 JUNE, 2024
CANBERRA**

Senators, I appreciate the opportunity to make opening remarks.

Diplomacy is on the frontline in the fight to protect and advance Australia's interests.

Underwritten by military capability, as set out in the National Defence Strategy.

Events of the last few years – the pandemic, Russia's appalling invasion of Ukraine, conflict in the Middle East, challenging geopolitical circumstances, global economic shocks, and increased instances of disasters – show us exactly how complex and contested the world has become.

And serve as reminders how our interests - in keeping Australians safe and prosperous - require active and consistent engagement in international affairs, to shape the world in the way we want.

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DFAT relies on our whole-of-government diplomatic network of more than 120 posts around the world to deliver on these interests, including to support Australians.

The value of this network was exemplified in our recent response to the crisis in New Caledonia.

To date, DFAT has assisted 454 Australian citizens, permanent residents and their family members - plus 93 foreign nationals – to depart New Caledonia.

We also deploy Australian diplomacy to help our partners in need. At the request of the PNG Government, Australia has responded to the recent devastating landslide in Papua New Guinea's Enga Province.

Our response has been a truly whole-of-nation effort, with DFAT coordinating an initial \$2.5 million in humanitarian assistance, logistics support and technical expertise.

Our hearts go out to all Papua New Guineans in the wake of this tragedy, which claimed so many innocent lives.

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To ensure we remain ready and able to deliver on Australia's interests, the recent Budget provided \$227.8 million to DFAT to protect government information and our diplomatic personnel working offshore, through delivering secure ICT systems and infrastructure, as well as appropriate physical facilities.

We will also be enhancing and expanding our physical presence in the Pacific.

And we will be undertaking stronger monitoring and enforcement of sanctions under Australia's sanctions framework.

An increase of \$190 million in Official Development Assistance, to a total of \$4.96 billion for the coming financial year, means we will:

- Deliver a record \$2 billion in ODA to the Pacific, and \$1.26 billion to Southeast Asia;
- Progress our commitments made under the historic Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union;
- Provide \$490.5 million to humanitarian, emergencies and refugee programs;
- And increase investments in climate change, environment, gender equality, disability and social inclusion, as targets

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prescribed in the 2023 International Development Policy are implemented.

And \$69.7 million will be allocated to delivering trade and tourism measures that incentivise Australian businesses to diversify globally, helping to build Australia's prosperity.

Taken together, this package of Budget measures will better position DFAT to meet the increasing challenges we encounter on the international stage, in support of our fellow Australians.

Finally, in trade, I note that sustained engagement and advocacy by the department and more broadly across Government has led to the further return of Australian exports to China. Most recently, China has lifted suspensions on five red meat establishments.

We will continue to press China to lift remaining trade impediments on live rock lobster and two red meat establishments.

Thank you.