

JSCOT – Question on Notice - ETU

Information on examples of post agreement implementation economic analysis requested by Senator Ayres.

Extract of ETU Submission to JSCOT on ChAFTA with Productivity Commission Link

The ChAFTA will lock Australians out of job opportunities, erode industrial and public safety standards, and expose Australia to unfunded legal action that costs millions.

Earlier this year the Productivity Commission voiced significant concerns over Free Trade Agreements¹ and, like unions, continue to argue that these agreements don't deliver measurable economy wide benefits as claimed, impose significant costs, and are oversold by governments.

Extract of ETU Submission into the review of ChAFTA with ABS Links

Despite repeated claims of massive trade liberalisation leading to exponential jobs growth, the statistics just do not add up. On 9 December 2015, then Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb claimed;

“Mr Robb said this outcome would immediately enhance our competitive position in the world’s second biggest economy which will be good for growth and job creation. Our dairy industry for example expects ChAFTA to result in 600-700 extra dairy jobs in the first year alone.”

Current ABS statistics show that from the period November 2015 – May 2017 there has been a total reduction in agricultural industry jobs of 31,400 total employed persons.²

Claims of exponential growth in GDP are also not currently bearing fruit with the last four quarters published by the ABS showing first a declining GDP growth followed by a record low trend of 0.4% quarter on quarter growth not seen since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis.³

The fact that availability of statistical data from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trading has been severely curtailed since the signing of ChAFTA only adds to the concerns that local Australian jobs are unnecessarily being replaced by often exploited foreign labour.

Extract of ETU Submission to JSCOT on TPP

But, as has become the status quo for trade agreements Australia is involved in, the TPP has been negotiated and will commence with almost no public scrutiny and absent the usual transparent examination that should be expected in a modern western democracy.

Too often in our experience, the overall benefits of trade agreements are over-sold by governments and the considerable downsides are dismissed.

¹ [Productivity Commission, Trade and Assistance Review 2013-14, June 2015](#)

² <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/ABS@Archive.nsf/log?openagent&6291005.xls&6291.0.55.003&Time%20Series%20Spreadsheet&8FD383735D83F01FCA258146001A6294&0&May%202017&22.06.2017&Latest>

³ http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/meisubs.NSF/log?openagent&5206001_key_aggregates.xls&5206.0&Time%20Series%20Spreadsheet&356C58F5129827C7CA25813700176281&0&Mar%202017&07.06.2017&Latest

In this case, Australian taxpayers are being required to forgo \$220 million over the forward estimates⁴ in lost tariff revenue in exchange for trading away their jobs, skills, industries and sovereignty through this deeply deficient trade agreement.

⁴ TPP National Interest Analysis which has since been removed from the parliamentary website.