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Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Submission to the Inquiry into the Customs Amendment (Controlled Trials) Bill 2021

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Department) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee's inquiry into the *Customs Amendment (Controlled Trials) Bill 2021*.

The Department notes the proposed Bill would provide a framework to enable the Australian Border Force (ABF) to establish controlled trials of new technology, business models and regulatory approaches to regulating imports, exports and licensing, with safeguards in place to ensure the security of Australia's cross-border trading regime. Importantly, the ABF will be able to recruit businesses to participate in the trials to ensure industry input into the design of new approaches.

The proposed Bill supports the Government's Simplified Trade System (STS) agenda, announced in the 2020-21 Budget. The STS reform agenda is focused on delivering a more efficient and digitised cross-border trade environment.

The Department supports the proposed Bill. Streamlining existing customs processes has the potential to deliver a range of benefits, including lower administrative costs to Government and more efficient flows of goods across borders, improving the competitiveness of Australian industry. Reducing the regulatory burden and streamlining administrative processes may encourage more businesses, including small to medium enterprises, to engage in international trade.

International trade is critical to Australia, creating jobs and growing economic prosperity. The proposed Bill is an important step towards developing a more efficient cross-border trading system, that enables Australian businesses and consumers to take full advantage of the benefits and opportunities of international trade.