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Senator Bridget McKenzie
Chair
Trade Sub-Committee
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

File Ref: B2017/0036

Dear Senator McKenzie

Thank you for your letter dated 20 December 2016 to the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, the Hon Michael Gunner MLA, regarding the Inquiry into Australia's trade and investment relationship with the United Kingdom, following the UK's referendum decision to leave the European Union. The Northern Territory has long standing ties with the UK, particularly through its investment in the cattle industry over the past 150 years. As such, the opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry is welcome.

Current trade volumes between the Northern Territory and the UK are low, with the UK ranking 30th in the list of the Northern Territory's trading partners. We do however acknowledge the importance of any future Free Trade Agreement that may be established with the UK. The Northern Territory would be supportive of efforts to put such an agreement in place, particularly as it is likely that the UK's trade relationship with Australia will gain greater prominence following Brexit.

As the UK seeks to reinvigorate its trading agreements and relationships, it is likely there will be opportunities to showcase Australia's trade and investment prospects and for events such as Australia Week in the UK to be held. The Northern Territory would seek to be a participant in any such events and would welcome an opportunity to meet with business delegations travelling to Australia from the UK. We consider that Austrade should seek to encourage such visits at an early opportunity.

The Northern Territory has also, in recent years, been active in the UK as we seek to fill workplace shortages. It is considered that both the period leading up to and post Brexit could see an upsurge in interest regarding UK migration to Australia, and we would welcome an opportunity to work with the Federal Government to capitalise on this.

We look forward to working with the Federal Government to expand trade and investment relations with the UK as our countries navigate a new trading path with each other in the post Brexit environment.

Yours sincerely

Sibylle Bräutigam
Acting Chief Executive Officer

31 January 2017