

RECOMMENDATIONS

(SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY ON TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA)

Department of Agriculture, (Trade & Development Division) Western Australia.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Current indications are that there is very little or no collaboration between Commonwealth or State governments on research & development undertaken across industry sectors in China.

1. It is recommended that the Commonwealth & State governments work in collaboration on research and trade initiatives undertaken in China so that opportunities in China are not fragmented by a lack of communication and intelligence between government agencies.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Currently, websites for the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade and Austrade, provide generic information on China; eg. *There are 300-400 Australian businesses currently present in China with more than 3000 Australian companies exporting to China across a range of industries.* China is a vast country and this information needs to be more specific to be of any use to Australian businesses wishing to enter and establish a long term presence in China.

2. It is recommended that the Commonwealth government either through the Department of Foreign Affairs or Austrade provide up to the minute, real and meaningful intelligence on businesses in China and Australian businesses operating in China.
3. It is recommended that this information is provided to respective State government agencies who use this intelligence to forge strategic networks within Australian based industry sectors to further trade networks and expansion into China and vice versa.

BUSINESS MIGRATION LINKS

While the Department of Foreign Affairs sees *people to people links as a vital strut of the China relationship*, it would appear to be an inadvertent oversight that no strategic focus is maintained on capturing and nurturing trade, economic, social and cultural linkages with past, present and future business migrants to Australia.

It is recommended:

4. That the Commonwealth government initiate and implement strategies to extend the *people to people links* to include business migrants to Australia.

NATIONAL CHINA TASK FORCE

It is clear that China as a country, trading partner, and emerging global super power has gained the attention of all governments (federal and state) throughout Australia.

It would appear, however, that governments at all levels are addressing China with a single-minded and somewhat individualistic approach to capture yet more commercial opportunities. This, in the longer term, could be disadvantageous to Australia as it may very well result in providing China with the balance of power in its dealings with each of the different states and the federal government of Australia.

It is recommended that:

5. The Commonwealth Government initiate A National Awareness Strategy on Activities in China to be developed and maintained at both Commonwealth and State government level;
6. That the Commonwealth government implement a China Task force comprising representatives from each of the industry sectors at Commonwealth & State government level to deal with industry specific issues to ensure a synergistic and comprehensive approach in understanding, responding to and dealing with issues arising out of the proposed Free Trade Agreement.
7. That the China Task Force also be the designated agency to deal with issues relating to difficulties experienced in exporting goods or services to China – see p.11 of Submission relating to export constraints for processed foods (currently no such agency exists and issues are handballed from one agency to another both in Australia and China);
8. That in the event of a Free Trade Agreement with China being implemented, the China Task Force recommended in (6) deals with follow up issues arising out of the China FTA. (Currently there appear to be no designated agencies in place to follow up on either the Singapore, US or Thai FTA and invariably, the Desk Officer involved in the negotiating process has moved on to another position).

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