



BUSTING CONGESTION AND SUPPORTING INVESTMENT AND JOBS

The Government's Deregulation Agenda

The Australian Government is committed to busting regulatory congestion and removing obstacles to business investment

The Government has made deregulation a key priority. We previously achieved over \$5.8 billion of savings from 2013 to 2016 through our Cutting Red Tape Agenda. We have now embarked on a new Deregulation Agenda to continue to remove impediments to business investment and job creation.

The Government has established a Deregulation Taskforce to drive improvements to the design, administration and effectiveness of the stock of regulation to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose.

The Taskforce has already looked at three key areas: making it easier for sole traders and microbusinesses to employ their first person; getting beneficial major projects up and running sooner; and reducing the regulatory burden for food manufacturers with an initial focus on exporting.

The Taskforce's primary focus is to identify barriers to investment and job creation from the perspective of business, and then to work with business and agencies to co-design solutions across jurisdictions.

This includes exploring opportunities to use 'regtech' to make it easier for businesses to identify their compliance obligations and engage with Government.

An initial emphasis has been making it easier for businesses to navigate their existing regulatory environments.

The Taskforce is also working on opportunities to reduce the regulatory burden by addressing regulatory design.

As well as overseeing the implementation of its current initiatives, the Deregulation Taskforce will now focus its attention on a second tranche of priority sectors and activities to identify more reforms to help business.

Government departments are also renewing their efforts to ensure that regulation is fit-for-purpose and regulatory processes are operating efficiently. All departments are reviewing their legislation to ensure that it achieves its intent in the most efficient and effective way, and that they are appropriately resourced and operating effectively. Departments are required to report back to Government every six months.

The Government's default option will always be not to regulate. Agencies must put forward the case for new regulation imposed on business and the community. Therefore, the Government's regulatory impact analysis settings are also being strengthened to:

- ensure the focus on regulatory cost doesn't come at the expense of understanding the economic and competition impacts of new proposals
- task the Office of Best Practice Regulation to assess Independent Reviews for relevance to the recommended option
- establish greater proportionality in Regulation Impact Statements, to ensure advice to Government is proportionate with the magnitude of the problem and potential impacts of proposed responses.



WHAT THE TASKFORCE IS ACHIEVING

Helping small business to employ people

- Establishing a new consolidated online checklist that guides small and micro-businesses through the steps of employing their first person. The checklist will make it easier for businesses to take on their first employee by providing them with the information they need to understand their obligations in relation to employment across multiple agencies.
- Developing a prototype to test the viability of a 'regtech' platform to take employers step-by-step through the process of putting on a new employee — thereby reducing time and costs and giving businesses confidence they are meeting their obligations. It will cover minimum pay and conditions, tax, superannuation and other obligations, right through to making an offer of employment and be designed to integrate with solutions offered by business, payroll and HR software providers, accountants and industry associations.

Streamlining business interactions with Government

- Modernising Australia's business registers to make it easier and faster for business to interact with Government, saving time and money. The new business registry will upgrade and consolidate 32 separate business registers onto a single system.
- The new registry will allow businesses to view, update, manage and maintain their data in one location using a tell-us-once principle, and transact with Government in one place. It will be available on-demand 24/7, so that transactions can be completed at any time and lay a foundation stone for future 'regtech' initiatives.

Getting beneficial major projects up and running

- Building a 21st century digital environmental approvals process, consisting of a new single online portal, an end-to-end workflow system and a biodiversity database to store and share information. The new system will transform the approvals process, reducing approval times and bringing forward economic activity.
- We are partnering with the Western Australian Government, where there is a large pipeline of major projects coming forward over the next decade, on the new system as a first step towards a consistent nationwide process.
- Building a biodiversity database to store and share information, such as wildlife surveys, will help proponents plan their projects, and will support robust environmental assessments and better, quicker decision making.

Exporting Australian food to the world

- Establishing a modern export documentation system to offer food exporters faster, simpler and more secure certification. The system will improve exporter experiences by providing a streamlined process with self-service access to export documentation and the ability to track and report via an online system, promoting paperless trade.
- Establishing a new trade information service to give Australian businesses a single, trusted and simple source of information on how to export, including regulatory and border compliance requirements. The service will reduce the time and costs associated with exporting and remove information barriers faced by small businesses.
- Better leveraging the Trusted Trader Program and Known Consignor Scheme to help Australia's food exporters expedite the flow of cargo in and out of Australia, and exploring new partnerships with overseas customs agencies to better support food exports.

SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYING PEOPLE

A small business owner is looking to expand their business by taking on their first employee. The small business owner will be able to use a new online checklist to guide them through the employment process, letting them know all the steps that they have to take. The small business owner is able to confidently comply with all relevant employment rules and regulations, to welcome their first employee to the business.

MAKING BUSINESSES REGISTRATIONS EASIER

A sole trader running a company structure, with an Australian Business Number and Business Name, is registered as the company secretary, director and sole shareholder — details of which all currently have to be kept up to date on different systems. The new modern business registry will allow the sole trader to update the Government once for all their roles and registrations in one quick process.



MORE DEREGULATION ACHIEVEMENTS

Making life easier for small business

- Paying small and family businesses within 20 days for contracts under \$1 million, boosting their cash flow and helping them grow.
- Extending Single Touch Payroll to include all small employers, allowing them to streamline their Pay-As-You-Go Withholding and Superannuation reporting to the ATO. Small businesses will benefit with simplified end of year reporting including the elimination of payment summaries. Employees will also benefit, being able to see their tax and super information being added to MyGov after every pay.
- Upgrading business.gov.au to provide business with an improved online experience, including better navigation, simplified content and a cleaner design. New program content is also making it easier for businesses to find business assistance and grants programs.
- Implementing a streamlined end-to-end digital application service for small to medium businesses called exportonline to reduce complexity and improve efficiency for SME exporters.

Support for job seekers

- Delivering digital and online servicing for job seekers and employers through a new and evolving digital and data platform. The new platform allows users to access the tools and information at a time that best suits them. Job seekers will receive tailored information to their circumstances and the new platform will make it easier to search for work and report against their mutual obligations. The digital platform will also make it easier for employers to engage with the system, find the right employees and access wage subsidies.

Reforming intellectual property

- Encouraging investment in Australia and helping Australian businesses benefit from their good ideas by updating our intellectual property regime to support innovation and transfer of technology.

Improving the efficiency of Native Title claims

- Streamlining Native Title processes to deliver a more flexible and efficient system, including improved pathways for dispute resolution, increased transparency and accountability for Native Title corporations, and greater flexibility for Native Title groups to set their own internal processes.

Easier access to safe chemicals for farmers

- Simplifying the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority's registration processes to promote quicker access for farmers to safe and effective chemical products while strengthening protections to humans, animals, plants and the environment.

Simplifying research grants

- Updating guidelines and timeframes for the application process for Cooperative Research Centres Grants, thus making it easier for industry and research partners to apply.

Streamlining communications regulation

- Introducing legislation to reduce the regulatory burden on the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors to simplify and remove redundant legislation, including duplicative reporting requirements for licensees, publishers and controllers.

REDUCING APPROVAL TIMES FOR MAJOR PROJECTS

A resources company is planning to develop a new mine site. The company is able to lodge the environmental approval documents digitally through a new online portal. The new digital system allows the company's approvals to be processed faster, so that work on the site can start sooner.

MODERNISING EXPORT DOCUMENTATION

A food exporter in Hobart is preparing to export their products overseas. Currently, the exporter has to wait for their approved permits to be mailed to them, or can travel to Melbourne to collect in person before their goods can be exported. Changes to the regulation mean that the exporter no longer has to wait to receive a printed export permit, but instead can receive it digitally, saving time and money.



OTHER REFORMS ON THE WAY

- Simplifying and improving the *Personal Property Securities Act 2009* and the Personal Property Securities Register to make it easier for business and consumers to use their assets to secure finance.
- Ensuring our national measurement framework remains fit-for-purpose and is responsive to changing technology and the needs of industry and consumers. A flexible measurement framework facilitates innovation by providing certainty for Australian businesses to measure quantity, quality and performance to develop new products and processes.
- Replacing the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive Program with a new, simplified and streamlined incentives program for employers of apprentices and trainees. The new Incentives for Australian Apprenticeships program will have a streamlined payment structure and will make it easier for employers to understand and claim incentives.
- Updating regulations that encourage the growth of Australia's space industry by removing barriers to participation for business, and promoting innovation, entrepreneurship and investment.
- Extending access to authenticated VET transcripts, including to employers, employment agencies and licencing bodies to make it easier for business to validate VET credentials provided by individuals.
- Developing a new online system to support employers using the Seasonal Worker Programme by simplifying and streamlining administration requirements to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses.

Ensuring regulation is fit for purpose by reviewing:

- Resources sector regulation, with a study undertaken by the Productivity Commission, to highlight best practice approaches and develop more effective regulation. Reporting August 2020.
- The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and consider recommendations on how the national environmental law can be modernised to deliver benefits for the environment, business and the community. Reporting October 2020.
- The industrial relations system to identify how it is operating and impediments to shared gains for employers and employees which could be subject to reform and enhance accessibility. Reporting 2020.
- The regulatory framework for agricultural and veterinary chemicals to improve access to chemicals for farmers. Reporting February 2021.
- The skilled migration occupation list to ensure it remains responsive to the skill needs of business. Reporting March 2020.
- The Export Market Development Grants Scheme to examine the most effective and efficient way to deliver financial assistance to SME exporters. Reporting March 2020.
- Border permits and licences to identify opportunities to remove barriers to international trade and reduce regulatory compliance costs for business. Reporting December 2019.



A message from Assistant Minister Ben Morton

“The Government’s Deregulation Agenda is improving the design and efficiency of regulation to support jobs and investment. We are working with businesses to identify the regulations and bureaucratic processes that impose the largest costs on the economy and the biggest hurdles to letting investment flow. We are tackling regulation from the viewpoint of business—putting ourselves in their shoes, getting down on the factory floor and looking at regulation from their perspective. There is always more work to do, but the Government has renewed our commitment to deregulation.”