



16 August 2019

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: jsct@aph.gov.au

Australia-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement (A-HKFTA)

I am writing on behalf of the Australian red meat and livestock industry¹ in response to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties inquiry into the Australia-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement (A-HKFTA) - as tabled in the Australian Parliament on 2 April 2019 and referred to the committee on 29 July 2019.

The conclusion of a comprehensive free trade agreement between Australia and Hong Kong will ensure continued access for red meat products on a transparent and unencumbered basis – which in turn will afford security, certainty and continuity to the trading relationship.

Australian livestock, beef, sheepmeat, goat meat, offal, processed meat and co-products exported to Hong Kong are currently afforded tariff-free access. The A-HKFTA will lock-in this favourable access, with both applied and bound tariffs being reconfirmed at 0%.

The closer economic ties forged with Hong Kong via the ratification of this agreement will also assist with future proofing the trade environment via enshrining mechanisms designed to promote greater transparency and predictability for Australian exporters – primarily through the availability of information on standards, regulations and procedures for small and medium-sized enterprises (as detailed in the Food Products Annex within the Agreement).

The A-HKFTA will complement the benefits our sector has derived from the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement and Australia's other trade agreements in Asia, including bilaterally with Japan and South Korea and regionally with ASEAN and through the TPP-11.

Based on the A-HKFTA text and accompanying tariff schedule, the Australian red meat and livestock industry recommends that the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties endorse the A-HKFTA and that binding treaty action be taken immediately. This in turn will enable the agreement to enter into force at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Andrew McCallum
Global Manager - Trade & Market Access
Meat & Livestock Australia
amccallum@mla.com.au

¹ Red Meat Advisory Council; Australian Livestock Exporters' Council; Australian Lot Feeders' Association; Australian Meat Industry Council; Cattle Council of Australia; Goat Industry Council of Australia; Sheep Producers Australia