

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT GROWTH**

Chair: Mr Ken O'Dowd MP

Deputy Chair: Dr Jim Chalmers MP

—Canberra Hearing—**Business Experience with Free Trade Agreements**

Parliament's Trade and Investment Growth Committee will hold its first public hearing in Canberra as part of its *Inquiry into the Business Experience in Utilising Australia's Free Trade Agreements*.

The committee was established to examine measures to further boost Australia's trade and investment performance including barriers to trade, the reduction of red tape and structural challenges and opportunities for the Australian community. As part of its remit, the Committee will focus on the experience of business in using Australia's existing free trade agreements (FTAs) including: New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, the United States, Chile, the Association of South East Asian Nations and Malaysia. This will assist in informing the new North Asia FTAs.

The Chair of the Committee, Mr Ken O'Dowd MP, emphasised the importance of learning from the experience of Australian business.

"We need to ensure that business is able to realise the enormous potential that FTAs provide. The best way to do that is to learn from the experience of businesses that have been using existing FTAs on a regular basis," Mr O'Dowd said.

The committee will hear evidence in Canberra from government agencies and from industry associations representing a diverse cross-section of the Australian economy.

"The potential benefits of FTAs are spread right through the Australian economy - in the service industries, in agriculture, in horticulture, in mining, in manufacturing – exporting businesses can expand their markets and businesses that use imported goods can reduce their costs," said Mr O'Dowd.

Date: Tuesday 21 July 2015, 9.00 am – 4.10 pm.

Location: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra

The Committee will hold additional hearings in Sydney and Melbourne in late July.

More information available at: www.aph.gov.au/fta

For media comment: Please contact the Office of the Committee Chair, Mr Ken O'Dowd MP on (07) 4972 5465

For background information: Please contact the committee secretariat:

Phone: (02) 6277 2233 Email: jsctig@aph.gov.au Website www.aph.gov.au/fta