

# DOING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR AUSTRALIA

The Howard  
Government



## ENCOURAGING EXPORTS

Since the Howard Government's election, the value of exports has increased from \$99 billion in 1995/96 to \$216 billion in 2006/07.

Australia's export performance is due in part to decisions by the Howard Government that have made our economy stronger and our businesses more competitive, including:

- Comprehensive tax reform, which replaced the complex and inefficient system of indirect taxes that penalised exporters by \$3.5 billion a year. Exports are exempt from the GST.
  - Creating a simpler, more flexible workplace relations system, that has produced 9 of the 10 most industrially co-operative years (measured by working days lost per 1,000 employees) since records were first kept in 1913. This helps Australian companies become more reliable and competitive suppliers to overseas customers.
  - Waterfront reform, which has delivered a 60% improvement in the productivity of our ports. Average crane rates increased from 16.9 movements per hour in March 1996 to 26.8 movements per hour in December 2006.
  - Removing Government debt and lowering inflation, which in turn has reduced pressure on interest rates and given businesses more confidence to expand.
- Working at the highest levels internationally for real reform of trade in agricultural and industrial products and services.
  - Successful negotiation of Free Trade Agreements with the USA, Thailand, Singapore and New Zealand and pursuing agreements with Japan, China, India, ASEAN countries, the Gulf Cooperation Council, Malaysia, Chile, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea.
  - The appointment of 30 new Austrade export facilitators dedicated to pursuing export opportunities arising from the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement.
  - Delivering an expanding network of specialist export advisers, including TradeStart offices with specialists to assist small and medium sized businesses and industries with high growth potential.
  - Providing small businesses with one-on-one coaching to assist in expanding their business offshore through the New Exporter Development Program.
  - The Export Market Development Grants Scheme (which encourages small and medium businesses to develop export markets by reimbursing up to 50% of expenses for eligible export promotion activities above a \$15,000 threshold).

The Coalition is working to further our success in promoting Australian exports, by:

The Howard Government will continue to work hard to ensure Australian exporters continue to drive and benefit from a strong Australian economy.



For more information about our achievements and plans for the future

