



**Australian
BORDER FORCE**

Trade Technology Working Group

OFFICIAL

Communique TTWG Meeting 10 April 2025

The Australian Border Force (ABF) convened the first Trade Technology Working Group (TTWG) meeting of the year at ABF Head Quarters in Brindabella Park, ACT with Mr Aaron O'Neill, Commander Customs and Border Modernisation Branch, as Chair, overseeing the commencement formalities and meeting administration. The meeting was conducted during caretaker period.

Members were briefed on the Digital Trade Accelerator Program (DTAP) Connect project. It will deliver a modern Application Programming Interface (API) as an additional communications method alongside the current Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system. This will enable organisations to enhance their systems and develop innovative digital trade solutions. The project team has been engaging with industry stakeholders to support the development of an API that is fit-for-purpose and aligned with the evolving needs of the trade sector.

Members discussed the future operational model for Customs, focusing on leveraging upstream data to streamline international trade and boost compliance. A presentation from Maersk highlighted global models like the United Kingdom's Trade Link trial at the Port of Felixstowe, showcasing the benefits of advanced technology and industry partnerships in managing risk upstream and reducing post-border interventions. The discussion emphasised the advantages of real-time data sharing, robust risk assessments and trusted digital platforms, while recognising the importance of secure data management and the potential of technologies like artificial intelligence. Members agreed on the need for strong data verification to counter risks, including biosecurity threats and supported a phased, trial-based approach to ensure compliance and manage regulatory changes.

Members discussed various strategies to enhance cargo screening efficiency and security through advanced technologies such as automation and AI. Key points included early intervention, risk-based assessments and remote screening to enhance throughput without compromising security. Emphasis was on data analytics and automated threat detection to identify high-risk consignments efficiently. Ongoing industry engagement and aligning Streamlining the Cargo Intervention Model (SCIM's) principles with global best practices were seen as vital for strengthening Australia's border security and trade facilitation objectives.

Members discussed the need for clear criteria in Fit and Proper Person assessments to maintain sector integrity. Members highlighted updating frameworks for compliance, reducing administrative burdens and legal risks in data management. Emphasis was placed on streamlining processes, adopting tech solutions like digital identity verification and fostering inter-agency collaboration for effective policy implementation.

On 9 April 2025, members of the National Committee Trade Facilitation (NCTF) discussed the rise in low-value e-commerce consignments which is straining cargo reporting systems and has led to cost recovery measures by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to better manage volumes and risk. NCTF members sought further discussion about this, which will be directly addressed with DAFF.

TTWG members highlighted issues with the Self-Assessed Clearance (SAC) framework, particularly poor data quality potentially affecting risk profiling and border security. Further scoping across industry representatives will continue on this item to consolidate a position before seeking a regulatory perspective.

The meeting concluded positively with reflections on progress in digital trade initiatives and commitments to ongoing collaboration.

The next TTWG meeting is scheduled for 20 August 2025.