



Australian
BORDER FORCE

Trade Technology Working Group

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Communique

TTWG Meeting 20 November 2024

The Australian Border Force (ABF) convened the third Trade Technology Working Group (TTWG) meeting of the year at Australian Border Force (ABF) Headquarters in Brindabella Park, ACT with Mr Aaron O'Neill, Commander Customs and Border Modernisation Branch, chairing the meeting.

The ABF provided an update on the Digital Trade Accelerator Project (DTAP), which builds on the ABF's Foundations to Enable a Single Trade Environment (STE Foundations) project work, by developing new industry-government systems integration processes for the provision and receipt of trade information. The first step requires integration of modern messaging, known as Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), with the legacy mainframe. The priorities for DTAP include API access to the Integrated Cargo System (ICS), with trialling digital IDs; testing to determine the impact of APIs on ICS such as ensuring its availability and stability; and notification of consignment status.

The Department of Finance (Finance) and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) outlined Australia's Digital ID System, a whole-of-government digital identity project. The objectives of the system are to provide a secure, convenient, voluntary and inclusive way for the digital verification of personal identification and other matters. The project has received funding of \$433 million over six years for regulatory and policy reform to establish MyID. The *Digital ID (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Bill 2023* and the *Digital ID Act 2024 (the Digital ID Act)* have both received royal assent. The *Digital ID Act* is supported by a legislative instrument and will commence on 1 December 2024.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) presented the Biosecurity Cargo Status Tracker (tracker) to members. The Tracker has been created as part of the Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing Systems (STEPS) Program, and provides industry with in-progress visibility of the status of goods consignments that have been referred to DAFF. The program also provides details of documentation, inspection, and biosecurity risks found at inspection.

Industry members led a discussion on two action items that were referred to TTWG from the most recent Trade and Goods Compliance Advisory Group (CAG), held 17 September 2024. The members agreed to accept the referral to investigate the possibility of developing digital solutions to address the concerns raised by industry.

Industry has requested the ABF investigate a digital solution for notifications of licence renewals and a digital solution for the transfer of personal information to alleviate negative impacts on industry, particularly associated with the implementation of new obligations incorporated into Customs Broker Licences (as outlined in ACN 2024/21 that came into effect on 1 July 2024) Members NOTED concerns regarding privacy and requested a digital solution be investigated, with Australia's Digital ID System potentially being a solution.

The Chair noted members concerns and confirmed that the issues raised in relation to implementation of new obligations incorporated in Customs Brokers Licences were appropriately being worked through by the Compliance Advisory Group as an implementation issue.

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