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Communique

TTWG Meeting 21 August 2024

The ABF convened the second TTWG meeting of the year at the Department of Home Affairs in Belconnen ACT with the Chair Ms Sasha Billett, Acting Assistant Secretary Customs and Border Modernisation Branch, conducting opening formalities and meeting administration.

Discussion commenced with an update by the Foundations to Enable a Single Trade Environment (STE Foundations) project team, which has been testing technology capability requirements for an incremental transition away from the Integrated Cargo System (ICS), without impacting current reporting processes. It was noted that appropriate foundations include contemporary interfaces for industry, and will require whole-of-government digital identity integration. Members acknowledged findings of the short-term trial of the Australian Border Force (ABF) Trade Portal, which allows users to submit Self-Assessed Clearances (SAC) as a use-case to test the underlying technical capability developed by the project team.

Members discussed feedback provided by industry participants of the pilot project, acknowledging the portal's integration issue with third party software; non-citizen difficulties accessing the system; requirements to use personal MyGov ID credentials for registration; the use of/submitting exports data into the trade portal; and the project's next stage. Noting the success of the trial to test the ABF's trade systems to support a future single trade environment, members agreed for a closure update to be provided at the next TTWG meeting.

Discussion turned to the Digital Trade Accelerator Program (DTAP), led by the (ABF) and Department of Home Affairs. DTAP discussions noted the two constituent projects, including DTAP Connect, which will provide integration with industry through modern Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), and DTAP Risk, which will deliver better targeting capability for improved border and biosecurity protection through enhanced customs and biosecurity risk assessments. Members considered the technical design, with a recommendation to include a filter option within the Consignment Status feature to enable business to screen the emails that come through. To facilitate further technical discussions, the ABF will call for expressions of interest with nominated representatives to collaborate on more detailed design elements through a technical sub working group.

In the meeting's final substantive agenda item, members were briefed on progress of the Streamlining the Cargo Intervention Model (SCIM) project. This project will develop and trial new streamlined intervention models to increase the detection of illicit items crossing Australia's borders through inbound sea and air cargo at major ports. The models will include the use of advanced border screening technology embedded within the supply chain. Members noted that the ABF is also investigating the use of automated threat detection technology to assist officers with decision-making processes.

The next TTWG meeting will be held on 20 November 2024.

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