



Australian Services Roundtable

Who we are

The Australian Services Roundtable (ASR) is the voice of Australian services, a peak body for the broad services sector at national level. Our mission is to create a better business environment and ensure international competitiveness for Australia's services industries. ASR's current membership includes:

- Telecommunications
- Financial Services (banking, insurance, securities, funds management & investment services)
- Professional Services (accountancy, legal services, engineering, architecture, design, consultancy)
- Education
- Tourism
- Information Technology, Computer & Manufacturing Services
- Standards & Conformance Assessment Services
- Transport
- Logistics
- Audio-visual services
- Media
- Personal, Entertainment & Cultural
- Other Business Services
- R & D Services
- Health Services
- Environmental Services
- Energy Services
- Mining Technology services

ASR is re-mapping public understanding of the Australian economy, to take greater account of the contribution of the services sector and to raise awareness of the need for change in our services business environment. For Australia to prosper in today's advanced global services markets, our services industries need to be effective competitors at home and abroad, and recognised as such. Services are where all advanced economies are headed. Australia is already one of the world's most services-oriented economies.

What we want

- Recognition that a vibrant services sector is critical to our economy and balance of trade, both in its own right and in leveraging the competitiveness of our agricultural, mining and manufacturing sectors
- Government policy focus on cross-portfolio "whole-of-services" issues with administrative arrangements to facilitate this
- Systematic application of international best practice regulation and taxation for Australian services industries
- Efficient, responsive and innovative public sector service delivery
- Infrastructure and financing for services industries
- A strong culture of services innovation
- A supportive environment for SMEs
- Global market access opportunities for services trade and investment
- Effective promotion of Australian services capabilities offshore
- Detailed and reliable statistics on Australia's trade in services

Immediate Priorities

- Appointment of a Cabinet level Minister with explicit cross-portfolio responsibility for the Services Industries and new associated administrative arrangements to support this
- Commitment to provide a minimum of \$1.01m over three years to partner with industry in the ASR Services Stocktake (see brochure)
- Commitment to \$800,000 pa additional funds for ABS collections on trade in services, including outward foreign affiliate trade
- Explicit policy focus on understanding and driving Services industries innovation and increased interaction with the R&D community
- Commitment to increased resources for Services within the Trade portfolio with a whole new look, independently of other sectors, at how to achieve more open global access for Australian services providers and how to promote and showcase Australian services capabilities offshore
- Explicit policy focus on the needs of Services providers within the Industry development portfolio
- Explicit and sustained whole-of-government attention to addressing skills shortages and to removing domestic regulatory impediments to Australian services competitiveness
- Commitment to remove impediments in the taxation system hindering Australia's services exports

Australia's Services Economy Really Matters

- The services sector accounts for 78% of GDP, 78% of gross industry value added and 60% of investment - close to 4/5 of the economy.
- Services industries employ 85 of every 100 Australians.
- 82% of Australian firms are services firms; most are small and medium and only 3% of them are exporting.
- Services exports are much more important than you think.
- in 2005 services exports were recorded as \$37b (Tourism \$11b, Passenger Transport \$7.5b, Education \$7b, Finance & Insurance \$1.5b).
but...
- The ABS does not yet know how to measure services exports delivered via Australian-owned offices overseas or via franchises.
- Recent ABS pilot surveys of Australian-owned affiliates overseas confirm that the ABS is probably only measuring less than 1/3 of Australia's actual exports of services.
- Even as currently inadequately measured, services exports are 23% of total exports ie larger than rural exports and almost on a par with manufactures exports.
- In addition, embedded services account for about 20% of the value of all Australia's exported goods.