



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australia's digital trade priorities and Pacific cooperation

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Why digital trade rules matter to Australia?

Examples of the restrictions industry tells us about:

- Data transfer pre-approval requirements
- Requirements for immediate access to data
- Restrictions on third party access to and/or disclosure of data
- Requirements restricting inbound cross-border movement of data.



What our digital trade rules seek to achieve

- A *rules-based* and *open* global trading environment that supports:
 - digitalisation of our economy
 - reduces barriers to trade, and
 - builds trust and confidence in the online environment.
- Rules that are *non-discriminatory*, *technology neutral*, and have *economy-wide application*.

WTO E-commerce Joint Statement Initiative

Why it matters:

- make cross-border trade administration simpler and lower costs
 - rules on e-payments, e-signatures, paperless trading
- improve trust in the online environment
 - e.g. commitments on spam and consumer protection
- ensure that the digital economy reflects our values
 - through a rule to enable researchers access to government data, and provisions against unreasonably blocking or slowing down internet traffic.

Australia's bilateral and regional negotiations

Benchmark agreements:

- Australia-UK FTA – concluded 2023
- Australia-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement – eif December 2020

Regional agreements with digital trade rules:

- ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA – upgraded August 2023
- RCEP – eif 2022
- CPTPP – signed 2018 by 11 countries

Bilateral negotiations in progress:

- Australia-India
- Australia-UAE

Singapore-Australia Digital Economy Agreement

- **Digital standards**
 - collaboration on the development of key standards to support digital trade
- **FinTech and RegTech**
 - collaboration between FinTech and RegTech enterprises and industry bodies to explore business opportunities and develop standards for open banking
- **Submarine data cables**
 - Commitments to facilitate submarine cable installation, maintenance and repair, and the prevention of cable disruptions
- **MOUs associated with the DEA**
 - Data innovation, AI, e-invoicing, e-certification for agricultural exports and imports, trade facilitation, personal data protection, digital identity

ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA: e-commerce

- Upgraded in 2023 to include:
 - obligations to promote moves towards paperless trading through the acceptance of e-signatures and e-authentication, and by encouraging the adoption of interoperable electronic invoicing systems
 - rules on the protection of personal information, consumer protection, transparency and the prevention of spam
 - rules that support the free flow of data across borders and prevent unjustified data localisation requirements
 - appropriate regulatory space, including for the protection of privacy



Pacific cooperation: e-commerce and digital trade

- Pacific Aid for Trade Strategy 2020-2025
- Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap
- E-Commerce Fund
- Pacific Digital Economy Program (PDEP)
 - National E-commerce Strategies
- UNCTAD's E-commerce and Digital Economic Program (ECDE)
- UNCTAD's eTrade for Women



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