

Austrade's programs

Austrade has a number of programs and initiatives aimed at assisting more Australian businesses into exporting.

Export Market Development Grants scheme

The Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) scheme is the Government's key financial assistance program for aspiring and current exporters. The scheme encourages Australian small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to enter and develop sustainable export markets by reimbursing up to 50 per cent of eligible export promotion expenses above a threshold of \$15,000.

The year 2006–07 saw continued strong demand for EMDG grants, with a two per cent increase in recipients and a six per cent increase in payments over the previous year. Most grants went to smaller and emerging exporters. See further details on EMDG on page 54.

TradeStart

TradeStart is an extensive national network that provides the resources, advice and expertise to help Australian businesses, especially those in regional and rural Australia, export successfully.

The Australian Government provided \$21.5 million from 2002–03 to 2005–06 to fund the TradeStart network and recently provided an additional \$23.3 million to extend TradeStart to 2009–10. In 2006–07 the TradeStart Network was reviewed and subject to a competitive tender which resulted in the reallocation of resources including opening 7 new locations. The total number of offices as at 30 June 2007 was 51.

In 2006–07 TradeStart assisted 859 Australian businesses achieve export sales worth \$301.2 million. Of these clients, 64 per cent (550) were new or irregular exporters, compared with 519 in 2005–06.

During the year the 31 TradeStart offices in regional Australia worked with 385 Australian businesses to achieve export sales worth \$150.9 million. Of those sales 233 were by new or irregular exporters compared to 224 in 2005–06.

New Exporter Development Program

The New Exporter Development Program (NEDP) is a package of export services designed to assist, coach and prepare new and irregular Australian businesses for export. Through the national Austrade and TradeStart offices, and with the support of Austrade's extensive overseas network, SMEs work alongside their export adviser to develop the capabilities and knowledge required to achieve overseas sales and become sustainable exporters.

In 2006–07, Austrade developed a series of 11 coaching modules for new exporters across a broad range of topics, including Getting Your Export Pricing Right, Freight and Logistics, and Risk Management. The modules have been produced to improve exporter skills and provide consistency in the delivery of Austrade's exporter education programs. The modules allow for individual one-on-one coaching, or for broader use in workshops. New exporter coaching workshops using the materials have subsequently been rolled out across Australia.

Corporate Partnerships

The Corporate Partnerships Program seeks to extend the impact of Austrade's international business advisory expertise and assistance through the development of partnerships and alliances with the private sector.

The Program offers partners:

- > the professional development program Going International to improve the depth of advice that can be provided to their clients
- > access to Austrade's network of market and industry specialists in locations all around the world
- > joint marketing and media activities promoting the benefits, opportunities and services available for those building business overseas.

During 2006–07, the Program delivered Going International sessions to 174 partner advisers and undertook 55 joint marketing activities with partner organisations. Corporate partners reported 668 of their clients achieved international business success.

Business Club Australia

Business Club Australia (BCA) is an Australian Government business initiative devised and administered by Austrade, utilising major international sporting events as a forum for providing business opportunities for Australian companies. To 30 June 2007, BCA, with about 8500 members, has delivered \$1.7 billion in business deals since its first program in 2000.

Australian Export Awards

The Australian Export Awards comprises a series of eight state and territory export awards recognising excellence and innovation in exporting across 12 categories.

Now in its 45th year, the Awards, co-presented with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, have earned a reputation throughout the Australian business community as one of the most prestigious and significant industry awards on the Australian business calendar.

Representatives from Austrade, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and each state/territory plan and implement the Awards program each calendar year. Award categories, eligibility rules, judging criteria, application processes, marketing and publicity activities are reviewed annually to keep the Awards fresh and innovative.