How Indian Companies can play a pivotal role in the supply chain to Australia?

Research Committee
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
(Set up by an Act of Parliament)
New Delhi

Basic draft of this publication was prepared by CA. (Dr.) Achinto Roy

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Edition	:	February, 2021
Committee/Department	:	Research Committee
E-mail	:	research@icai.in
Website	:	www.icai.org
Price	:	₹ 100/-
ISBN	:	978-93-90668-11-3
Published by	:	The Publication Department on behalf of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, ICAI Bhawan, Post Box No. 7100, Indraprastha Marg, New Delhi - 110 002.
Typeset by	:	Elite-Art, New Delhi
Printed by	:	Sahitya Bhawan Publications, Hospital Road, Agra - 282 003. February/2021/500 copies

Foreword

The efforts of the Indian government, the export promotion councils, numerous exporters, manufacturing companies and more importantly the enterprise of private individuals has resulted in phenomenal growth of exports that India has witnessed over the years. The nation has come a long way from a trade deficit nation in 1960s to the one which saw a trade surplus. Despite this seemingly good performance, there is a daunting task to work on positioning ‘Brand India’ as a globally respected trading power in the years to come.

This report aims to contribute to the development of trade between India and Australia and thereby strengthening of ‘Brand India’. The report draws inspiration from the uncertain times that COVID 19 inflicted on the world especially in terms of supply chain disruptions that occurred as a fall out.

I am pleased to note that the Research Committee of the Institute under the ‘ICAI Research Project Scheme’ undertook the Research Project on the topic of **‘How Indian Companies can play a pivotal role in the supply chain to Australia?’**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to CA. Anuj Goyal, Chairman, Research Committee and CA. Kemisha Soni, Vice-Chairperson, Research Committee, who took the initiative to introduce ‘ICAI Research Project Scheme 2020’ to encourage research-based activities. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to members of the Research Committee who have made invaluable contribution through their expert guidance in the finalisation of the Research Report.

I am confident that this Research Report will be extremely useful for the members and other stakeholders as well.

New Delhi **CA. Atul Kumar Gupta**
February 2, 2021 **President, ICAI**

Preface

The Research Report focuses on developing trade between India and Australia and more specifically on how Indian companies can play a pivotal role in the supply chain to Australia? The central theme of the report relates to a supply chain approach to trade development between Australia and India. A supply chain approach is adoption of a comprehensive upstream and downstream long-term approach to build trade relations and responding to customer needs when most called for. These type of helps create and sustain supply chain arrangements and long-term relations in business.

The report primarily focuses on the role Indian companies and professional advisory services can play to achieve the goal of developing supply chain relationships with Australian companies.

I am thankful to CA. Atul Kumar Gupta, President, ICAI and CA. Nihar N. Jambusaria, Vice President, ICAI who inspired me and Research Committee to introduce 'ICAI Research Project Scheme' and undertake research projects on contemporary and relevant topics.

I would also like to extend my thanks to CA. Kemisha Soni, Vice-Chairperson, Research Committee and all the members of the Research Committee.

Further, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate CA. (Dr.) Achinto Roy for writing Research Report on the topic of '**How Indian Companies can play a pivotal role in the supply chain to Australia?'** and to express my thanks to Dr. Subhash Datta, Expert for providing his valuable comments and suggestions for improvement of technical and presentation aspect of the Research Report. I also acknowledge the assistance and co-operation rendered by Dr. Amit Kumar Agrawal, Secretary, Research Committee and CA Rahul Paul, Project Associate who gave their valuable inputs during preparation of this Research Report.

I believe and trust that this Research Report will be immensely useful to the members and to others interested.

New Delhi — **CA. Anuj Goyal**
February 2, 2021 — **Chairman, Research Committee**

Content

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Executive Summary

This report aims to understand the business and trade development opportunities for Indian companies to work with Australian companies in setting up upstream and downstream supply chains. The report is written largely from the perspective of Indian companies who may be interested in exploring opportunities in Australia. It draws on primary research based on qualitative interviews with key stakeholders involved in business, consulting and trade facilitation between the two nations. This is supported by relevant secondary research to provide a snapshot of the current state of trade and business between the two nations. India and Australia shared a two-way trade relationship of $30.4 billion in 2018[1], placing India as Australia's eighth largest trading partner.

The most encouraging aspect evident in the report is the enormous goodwill and willingness to engage further on part of both governments and businesses. The desire and need to expand trade and business strongly emerges from key stakeholders' comments. Major opportunities are noted in pharmaceuticals, electricals, textiles, chemicals, plastics, footwear along with a range of other areas such as digital cooperation, medical technology and strategic minerals to name a few.

The report is comprised of five sections following the introduction. The first three sections consider Australia-India relations, the current state of trade and business and the sectoral opportunities for Indian companies to explore and seek supply chain partnerships with Australian companies. The next two sections discuss stakeholder views on impediments to trade and doing business, followed by recommendations that Indian companies can explore and adopt to help address these.

1 https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/negotiations/aifta/Pages/australia-india-comprehensive-economic-cooperation-agreement

Introduction

Since India's independence in 1947, successive governments have placed a strong emphasis on developing the nation's export capability to multiple markets around the globe. The efforts of the Indian government, the export promotion councils, numerous exporters, manufacturing companies and most importantly the enterprise of private individuals has resulted in phenomenal growth of exports that India has witnessed over the years. India's export growth story is a testimony to the vision and efforts of many sectors, both state and private in India. The nation has come a long way from a trade deficit nation in 1960s to one with a consistent trade surplus during the past decade. The total exports (merchandise and services) from India for the period April 2020 to November 2020 amounted to USD 304.25 billion, against a total import of USD 290.66 billion resulting in a trade surplus of USD 13.59 billion.[2] Despite this seemingly good performance for the period of April to November 2020 as well as over the years, there is still scope and opportunity to review and position 'Brand India' as a globally respected trading power in the years to come. This is reflected in the establishment of a national investment promotion and facilitation agency by the Indian government called 'Invest India', along with 13 dedicated country-specific desks to facilitate inward investment and trade.[3]

This report aims to contribute to the development of trade between India and Australia, thereby the strengthening of 'Brand India'. The report draws inspiration from the uncertain times that COVID-19 inflicted on the world, in particular the supply chain disruptions that occurred as a result. The report focuses on developing trade between India and Australia and specifically provides directions on how Indian companies can play a pivotal role in the supply chain to Australia. The central theme of the report relates to a supply chain approach to trade development between Australia and India. A supply chain approach, as explained in the report, is the adoption of a comprehensive upstream and downstream long-term approach towards building trade relations between companies, allowing customer needs to be met when called for. During the pandemic, import supply chains of face

[2] Ministry of Commerce, India https://commerce.gov.in/trade-statistics/latest-trade-figures/
[3] For details about Invest India, visit https://www.investindia.gov.in/about-us

masks and sanitisers to Australia from other nations were disrupted resulting in severe shortages in Australia. Domestic companies in Australia, especially breweries, stepped in and started making sanitisers to meet domestic demand in Australia, while Australian overseas trade bodies such as Global Victoria scouted for and arranged supplies of masks and sanitisers from India on an emergency basis[4]. Indian companies did well to respond and supply the needs of Australian importers when most needed[5]. This is the kind of response that helps to create and sustain supply chain arrangements and thereby long-term relations in business.

The report primarily focuses on the role Indian companies and professional advisory services (such as members of the Institute) can play in achieving the goal of developing supply chain relationships with Australian companies. The report has been written in a simple format and presented in sections that are directly relevant for Indian companies and members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India to consider in developing trade and business between India and Australia. The report provides information for Indian companies and businesses that can be actioned upon at the people-to-people level. In trade and diplomacy, people-to-people contact is effective in creating underlying change that further strengthens an existing mutually beneficial relationship.

The report may also encourage Australian companies and businesses to seek Indian partners and create solid supply chains that are geopolitically stable and mutually beneficial. Australian manufacturers are already seeking alternate supply chains to replace their manufacturing in China.[6] Ground conditions exist in the form of good relations shared between the Governments of India and Australia and the goodwill shared between the two nations and their peoples. There is an opportunity to build upon that mutual advantage and build quickly. The geopolitical dynamics of the Asia Pacific offer an added dimension and opportunity for Indian companies due to the deterioration of Australia's relations with China. Australia shares a two-way trade of A$252 billion with China. This makes China, Australia's largest

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[4] Mr. Gopi Shankar, Trade and Industry Director, Global Victoria, Bengaluru Office, India 2020, Interviewed by Dr. Achinto Roy.

[5] Mr. Gopi Shankar, Trade and Industry Director, Global Victoria, Bengaluru Office, India 2020, Interviewed by Dr. Achinto Roy.

[6] https://www.aumanufacturing.com.au/australian-supply-chains-could-shift-away-from-china-but-will-they-move-onshore

trading partner.[7] If the Sino-Australian trade reduces by even 20% in the near future, Indian businesses have the opportunity to double the two-way trade of $30.4 billion[8] between India and Australia. This is possible if Indian companies can fill in the supply chain gap as well as focus on buying from Australia.

Why a supply chain approach is being discussed in this report?

Supply chain analysis is a more comprehensive and relevant way of looking at trade between two nations. A reference to a supply chain is made in this report instead of the act of exporting or importing goods and services. A supply chain indicates the presence of a long standing interdependent relationship between organisations who co-create value for their customers and other stakeholders through various forms of upstream and downstream collaborations. In their landmark research article published 19 years ago, Mentzer et al. (2001, p. 18) defined supply chain as *"the systemic, strategic coordination of the traditional business functions and the tactics across these business functions within a particular company and across businesses within the supply chain, for the purposes of improving the long-term performance of the individual companies and the supply chain as a whole."* This definition explains the nature of interdependent and profitable relations that a vibrant supply chain sustains for all companies involved. Since then, the article by Mentzer et al. (2001) has been cited 7109 times (at the time of writing this report in January 2021) in Google Scholar. This is an extraordinarily large number of academic citations for a single journal paper, thus highlighting the relevance of the authors' definition of supply chain in practice.

A group of the same authors revisited the definition of supply chain in 2019 to incorporate the impact and role of technological changes, such as the advent of blockchain technology and artificial intelligence.[9] Technology has had a profound impact on creating, nurturing and advancing the utility of supply chains. Adopting a supply chain perspective places the customer at the centre of the business' purpose. In a nutshell, the customer-centric

[7] https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/china/Pages/china-country-brief

[8] https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/negotiations/aifta/Pages/australia-india-comprehensive-economic-cooperation-agreement

[9] Min, S, Zacharia, Z & Smith, C 2019, 'Defining Supply Chain Management: In the Past, Present, and Future', *Journal of Business Logistics,* vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 44-45..

approach requires deeper interorganisational collaboration that seeks to add value to a product or service by reducing costs, delivering on quality and more importantly delivering personal well-being for the customer. All of which is likely to benefit the businesses involved in the supply chain with lifetime customers. In a modern customer-centric approach, a customer's personal well-being comprises of the entire customer experience of buying a product or service, the after sales experience in terms of usage and maintenance and the associations of the product or service with the environment, human rights and other aspects of sustainable development. This may sound prima facie farfetched and too theoretical. However, the meaning and purpose of considering a supply chain approach to trade between companies of two nations has an intrinsic value of everlasting business relations that strengthen over time.

Imagine a supply chain of manufacturers, exporters, importers, distributors and retailers working collaboratively to deliver goods and services needed by customers with a clear recognition of the value adding capability at each player in the chain and at each point of transaction within the supply chain. Add to this, the ability of each individual member of the supply chain to be able to contribute to the goals of delivering quality, timely delivery at a reduced cost, sharing of risks and information, supported by research and skills to achieve these goals. Such an arrangement shall certainly lead to an increase in rewards for all, as well as nurture relationships of trust and goodwill between businesses participating within the chain. These interdependent relations between companies will deliver higher profits and superior goods and services if they remain unbroken and generate repeat business consistently. Supply chains created with an orientation or mindset to create supply chains provide space and opportunity for innovation that benefits all concerned. This is the precise reason why the report refers to trade development between companies in India and Australia recommending the use of a supply chain approach rather than a transactional approach.

Project Background and Research Methodology

The research project has been funded by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India under their research development scheme for members of the Institute. The topic was proposed by the author who is a member of the Institute and accepted by the Research committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India. The study has been approved under an ethics approval process at the author's home university prior to commencement of the study under reference no. BL-EC 35-20 dated 31st August 2020 to conduct field work and interview key stakeholders.

The report draws on research undertaken from September 2020 to January 2021. The report triangulates information from relevant and diverse sources (listed under the references section with sources for further reference listed under appendix 1) as well as draws on qualitative research, mainly in the form of 15 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. These stakeholders were identified from the public domain using a purposive sampling approach. Only those organisations engaged in trade or trade facilitation between the two countries were approached. Thus, key stakeholders such as importers, companies of Indian origin[10] in Australia, trade facilitation agencies both government and private were identified and contacted. A total number of 23 contacts were made, out of which 15 finally consented and participated in the interviews. The 15 stakeholders are a diverse group comprising of 7 Australian companies who import from India, 2 company executives of Indian companies in Australia, 2 directors of Australian trade organisations who consented to be named, 2 consultants engaged in facilitating trade with India out of which one consented to be named, another strategy consultant who works with an Australian education company establishing business relations in India and one academic scholar specialising in Australian diplomacy in Asia. Some of these stakeholders have consented to be named in the report, while most have not been named as is the protocol applicable under the ethics approval that the author received from his home university.

Appendix 2 at the end of the report provides a list of the questions that were asked during the conduct of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders. The questions asked were customised to the stakeholder's role in trade, business or trade facilitation between the two nations. Thus, all stakeholders were not asked all the questions.

Structure of the Report

The report is presented in five main sections. The first section briefly discusses Australia-India relations, followed by two sections that draw on the theme of trade and business development opportunities. The second section

[10] Company with a head office in India.

presents an analysis of the current trade between two nations and followed by a discussion of possible opportunities offered by certain sectors of the Australian economy for Indian companies and sectors of congruence that may be found between the two. The fourth section discusses stakeholder views on impediments to trade between the two nations. The impediments highlighted by stakeholders are both perceived and real. This is followed by a list of recommendations in section five. These are discussed individually drawing on qualitative research and interviews with key stakeholders. A list of references and a link to useful resources is provided at the end of the report. Footnotes have been used extensively to facilitate ease of reading and reference all throughout.

Limitations of the Report

The entire research work for this report was undertaken within a very short time span (September 15, 2020 to January 2021) as the submission date for the report was mandated as January 31, 2021. This meant that more qualitative interviews of key stakeholders could not be conducted to strengthen the findings. Secondly, the research was conducted during the disruptive times of COVID-19, when people worldwide were preoccupied with more difficult aspects of running their businesses and attending to their daily lives lived under various pressures. In addition, travel between different states in Australia was restricted. As a consequence of both, not all key stakeholders who were approached could participate.

The conclusions drawn within the report are based on both primary data (field interviews) and secondary data drawn from various sources including economic and trade data from previous years. In that sense, the report relies on current and historical data to highlight future opportunities. However, the global business environment is subject to rapid changes due to the disruptive power of Industry 4.0 involving machine learning, big data and analytics, artificial intelligence, facial recognition technology and electric driverless vehicles to name a few. It is therefore difficult to predict the future based on what has occurred in the past.

The author has taken every care to verify facts and avoid errors. Nevertheless, the author takes responsibility for any error that may have crept in. However, the author does not take responsibility for business decisions made by anyone on the basis of the report. It is strongly urged that business decisions should be made after due diligence on part of the decision-maker. The report does not comment on government policy or attempt to make policy suggestions. The report focusses on trade development as a private effort and acts as a pointer of opportunities for consideration by private businesses in both countries about possibilities to grow trade between India and Australia.

Chapter 1

Australia-India Relations

Since the turn of the millennium, Australia and India have shared strong political, economic and people-to-people ties. In the present era, trade and security are increasingly significant components of the Australia-India relationship. As of 2018-19, India was Australia's eighth largest trading partner and fifth largest export market, driven primarily by coal and international education.[11] The economic partnership continues to grow and is underpinned and endorsed by the Australian government in its 'India Economic Strategy' (IES). Economic ties have been further reinforced by closer security ties in recent years, with both Commonwealth nations elevating their bilateral relationship to a 'comprehensive strategic partnership' at the Australia-India Leaders' Virtual Summit in 2020.[12]

Shared concerns over China's growing role in the Indo-Pacific region have also enhanced Indian and Australian defence ties in recent years. With the vacuum presented by a declining US and the unpredictability of regional institutions, India and Australia, as 'like-minded' powers have engaged through semi-regular joint naval exercises, including AUSINDEX and the 'Malabar exercises'. Notably, the most recent Malabar exercise has involved Japan and the US, who along with India form part of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or 'Quad,' a group that has been in the developmental stages for over a decade. Along with the recent signing of a Mutual Support Logistics Agreement between Australia and India (which allows for greater defence and strategic interoperability), there appears to be a sincere desire from both sides to revive and bolster defence ties, prompted by the geostrategic realities of the Indo-Pacific and the challenges posed by a resurgent China.

In addition to trade and security, people-to-people links have grown between both nations over the past decade. During the years of the Australian government's White Australia Policy (1901-1975), such links were limited,

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11 https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/Pages/india-country-brief

12 https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/india-australia-virtual-summit-what-did-we-achieve/

contributing to a weak Australia-India relationship. However, outmigration from India has grown significantly over the past thirty years, with India now one of the largest sources of permanent migrants for Australia. According to the most recent census in 2016, the Indian diaspora amounts to approximately 700,000, out of which 592,000 were born in India.[13] The majority are either skilled migrants or international students, with India also the second largest source of international students for Australia, further reflecting the centrality of education to the Australia-India relationship (albeit remaining a largely one-way exchange). In addition, sport, particularly cricket, remains a key connection between the two countries, with both teams highly ranked and regularly competing in bilateral series.

There are, nonetheless, several hurdles that continue to encumber the Australia-India relationship. Despite growing economic ties and several negotiations, both countries have been unable to secure a free trade agreement. Furthermore, India's status as a nuclear power has been a point of contention for successive Australian governments, in light of the broader push towards non-nuclear proliferation. More fundamentally, a difference in opinion over the security landscape has coloured and hindered Australia-India relations. Since the Cold War era, Australia has viewed security through the prism of its American alliance and the Australia, New Zealand, United States (ANZUS) security treaty. Meanwhile, a more ambiguous approach has shaped India's security outlook, in accordance with its commitment and pioneering role in the non-alignment movement. In part, it explains why the Quad alliance has taken time to progress and why defence ties between the Australia and India have only recently advanced. It is worth noting that India being a nuclear power can work in favour of an India-Australia strategic alliance. Australia holds 34% of the world's uranium reserves[14] with no plans to build nuclear power plants while India needs a reliable uranium supplier which Australia can become.

Despite longstanding formal ties between Australia and India, the relationship has developed primarily since the early 2000s and is, in a sense, a young partnership. The elevation of the relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership and regular interactions at international meetings, such

[13] https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/Pages/india-country-brief

[14] https://www.ga.gov.au/data-pubs/data-and-publications-search/publications/australian-minerals-resource-assessment/uranium

as the East Asia Summit and G20, indicate a deepening of ties between two strategic partners whose interests have increasingly aligned over the Indo-Pacific region. Notwithstanding some of the aforementioned challenges, the Australia-India relationship is likely to advance and grow deeper in the years to come.

Chapter 2

Australia and India: Current Trade and Future Opportunities

This section provides key information relating to the Australian economy and the current trade between Australia and India. The discussion is supported by recent economic data and is followed by an analysis of future opportunities for Indian companies to develop trade and business with Australia. The information presented here has been collected from a range of primary and secondary sources, and includes relevant material drawn from interviews with notable stakeholders who are engaged in business and trade development between the two nations.

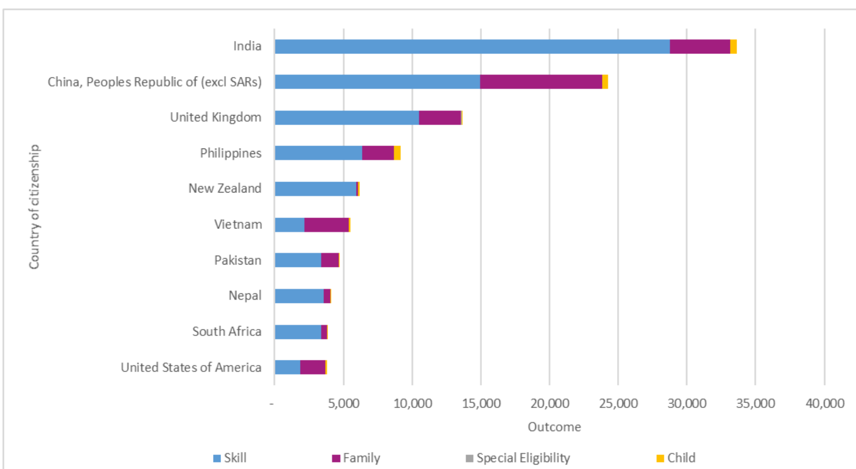
India is Australia's eighth largest trading partner after China, Japan, European Union, United States, South Korea and Singapore. In 2018, the two nations shared a two-way trade in goods and services amounting to $30.4 billion.[15] Australia's stable economy and the recent agreement on Australia-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2020[16] provides an encouraging background for Indian companies to pursue business opportunities with their counterparts in Australia. In addition, recent geopolitical developments have dampened Australia-China relations and has prompted the Australian government to consider alternate sources of imports, as well as seek expansion of trade relations with other nations.

Against this backdrop of events, India has a range of factors in her favour for increasing trade relations with Australia. First, both countries are open democracies and longstanding members of the Commonwealth. Second, India enjoys a very important position in Australia's future plans as affirmed in Australia's 'India Economic Strategy to 2035' released in 2018.[17] Likewise, as a reciprocal response to Australia's 'India Economic Strategy to 2035, the Confederation of Indian Industry released a 'Australia Economic Strategy

[15] https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/negotiations/aifta/Pages/australia-india-comprehensive-economic-cooperation-agreement
[16] https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/Pages/joint-statement-comprehensive-strategic-partnership-between-republic-india-and-australia
[17] https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/index.html

Report in December 2020[18], confirming Indian industry's interest in developing trade with Australia. Third, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, India is Australia's eighth largest trading partner and enjoys good diplomatic relations with the country. Fourth, companies of Indian origin are already operating in Australia such as Infosys, TCS, Suzlon, and the Birla and Adani groups. Fifth, Austrade, an Australian government organisation promoting Australian trade and investment overseas, has rolled out a program of events from October 2019 to develop business ties with India with the express aim of "transforming Australia's economic partnership with India between now and 2035. Goals include lifting India into its top three export markets and making India the third largest destination in Asia for outward investment."[19] Add to all these the growing presence of a large Indian diaspora in Australia who contribute to Australia culturally and intellectually, along with the distinction of being the second highest immigrant tax paying community in the country.[20] In recent years, India has been noted in Australia's annual migration report as the largest source country for migrants coming into the country (see table 1) below:

Table 1- Migration Program Outcome by country and region of citizenship (2018-19: top ten countries of citizenship)



[18] https://aes2020.in
[19] https://www.austrade.gov.au/events/events/aibx
[20] https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/indian-born-skilled-workers-top-amongst-australian-taxpayers-says-ato-abs-data

Source: 2018-19 Migration Program report available at https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/research-and-stats/files/report-migration-program-2018-19.pdf accessed on 2/1/21

Australia's stable economy

The Australian economy has steadily grown at an average GDP rate of 2.48% during the period 2015 to 2019 (see table 2 below).

Table 2: Australian Economy GDP growth rate (annual%)

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
2.2	2.8	2.3	2.9	2.2

Source: The World Bank 2020, World Development Indicators, viewed 2nd January 2021, https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG&country=AUS.

During 2020, the Australian economy suffered setbacks due to COVID-19 along with other economies around the world. Nevertheless, the Australian economy did not suffer as much comparatively as many other economies did. This was largely due to various forms of financial support proactively extended by the Australian government to businesses and individuals with a view to mitigate the economic consequences of COVID. After the COVID related lockdowns were lifted, the Australian economy witnessed a 3.3 % rise in GDP for the quarter ended September 2020. The household savings ratio also increased during two quarters of 2020 (see table 3) as a result of people not being able to freely move around and spend money on a range of normal activities during the lockdown such as shopping, hospitality, socialisation and daily expenses associated with work, except for expenditure incurred on basic consumption. This temporary forced growth in savings indicates potentially pent-up demand for consumer spending in 2021. The detailed economic data obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics website for the period September 2019 to September 2020 is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Detailed GDP September 2019 to September 2020 (percentage changes a)

Chain volume GDP and related measures (b)	Jun 19 to Sep 19	Sep 19 to Dec 19	Dec 19 to Mar 20	Mar 20 to Jun 20	Jun 20 to Sep 20	Annual Sep 19 to Sep 20
GDP	0.6	0.4	-0.3	-7.0	3.3	**-3.8**
GDP per capita **(c)**	0.2	-	-0.6	-7.2	3.2	**-4.7**
Gross value added market sector (d)	0.4	0.1	-0.6	-7.9	3.1	**-5.5**
Real net national disposable income	0.9	-0.5	-0.1	-7.4	4.8	**-3.5**
Productivity						
GDP per hour worked	-0.7	0.2	0.6	3.4	-1.1	**3.2**
Real unit labour costs	-	1.2	-0.6	-8.9	-0.7	**-9.0**
Prices						
GDP chain price index (original)	0.6	-1.2	1.0	-0.3	-0.1	**-0.5**
Terms of trade	0.6	-4.4	0.4	0.9	0.7	**-2.5**
Current price measures						
GDP	1.2	-0.1	0.3	-7.4	3.7	**-3.9**
Household saving ratio	6.2	5.3	7.6	22.1	18.9	**na**

Notes:

a. Change on preceding quarter, except for the last column which shows the change between the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Excludes Household saving ratio.

b. Reference year for chain volume measures and real income measures is 2018-19.

c. Population estimates are as published in the National, state and territory population (cat. no. 3101.0) and ABS projections.

d. ANZSIC divisions A to N, R and S. See Glossary - Market sector

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020, Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, viewed 2nd January 2021, https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/national-accounts/australian-national-accounts-national-income-expenditure-and-product/sep-2020#economic-overview.)

Australia – India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2020

On 4 June 2020, the Prime Ministers of Australia and India met online at the India-Australia Leaders Virtual Summit to discuss a range of issues. The virtual meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia resulted in elevating the bilateral strategic partnership signed in 2009 to a comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations. The partnership envisages cooperation between the two nations built around eleven broad areas of mutual importance. Each area of cooperation brings the two nations closer in many ways and sets the context for development of trade and business between India and Australia for the longer term. Areas of cooperation such as economic, innovation and entrepreneurship, agriculture and water resources management, education, culture, tourism and most importantly people-to-people ties are relevant for Indian companies to understand and leverage for doing business with Australia. Table 4 provides a summary of such areas of cooperation.

Table 4: A summary of areas of cooperation between the two nations and their implementation:

Areas of cooperation	**How areas of cooperation will be implemented**
Enhancing Science Technology and Research Collaboration	a) Australia – India Strategic Research Fund has been strengthened to promote innovative solutions to respond to COVID and other jointly determined areas of cooperation b) **Framework Arrangement on Cyber and Cyber-Enabled Critical Technology Cooperation.***

	c) **MOU on Cooperation in the field of Mining and Processing of Critical and Strategic Minerals (this will ensure that both nations work as strategic partners in ensuring supply of high-quality minerals and cooperation in technology for exploration and extraction of minerals. The goal to engage in a much deeper manner in the mining sector (which is predominantly in Eastern India) has led to proposed opening of a full-fledged Australian Consulate- General in Kolkata, in Eastern India. ***
Maritime Cooperation for an open and inclusive Pacific	**Joint Declaration on a Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. The declaration refers to multiple areas of cooperation that include Australia's support for India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, expansion of linkages between maritime agencies on either end, sharing technologies and resources to support the health and sustainability of oceans by combatting maritime litter, single use plastic waste, illegal and unregulated fishing.***
Defence cooperation	Defence exercises through an arrangement concerning mutual logistics support (MLSA). MoU on Defence Cooperation.

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Regional and Multilateral cooperation	Involves a number of areas of cooperation between the two nations and other Indo Pacific nations, including member states of the ASEAN alliance.
Terrorism	Support a comprehensive approach to combatting terrorism and steps being taken by international bodies, including the United Nations.
Economic Cooperation: A more prosperous shared future	Broadly speaking, to re-engage on a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) and work on areas of mutual interest including double taxation, use of the Indian RuPay card in Australia and a range of business and investment aspects.
Innovation and Entrepreneurship *	"…enhance cooperation in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector and decided that **major industries of both countries should endeavour to integrate the SME/MSMEs of the other country into their supply chains, thereby diversifying bilateral trade**.* Both countries jointly decided to take forward SME/MSME cooperation including through the Australia India Business Exchange program". (DFAT 2020)
Agriculture cooperation and water resources management	Continue to build upon the existing areas of cooperation in agriculture, reduce supply chain disruptions, more market access and improve water management and sustainable economic development through a MOU **on cooperation in the field of Water Resources Management.***

Education, Culture, Tourism and People to people ties	a) MOU for vocational education and training b) Strengthening and broadening cooperation in travel, tourism and aviation sector c) Inter-parliamentary interaction d) Expanding linkages between people including a draft migration and mobility partnership arrangement
Support in UN and international bodies	Cooperation and support for multilateralism and enhance cooperation under the annual Australia-India **Energy Dialogue.** *
Public Administration and Governance	MOU on Co-operation in the Field of Public Administration and Governance Reforms.

*Highly relevant to trade between companies of both nations (author's opinion)

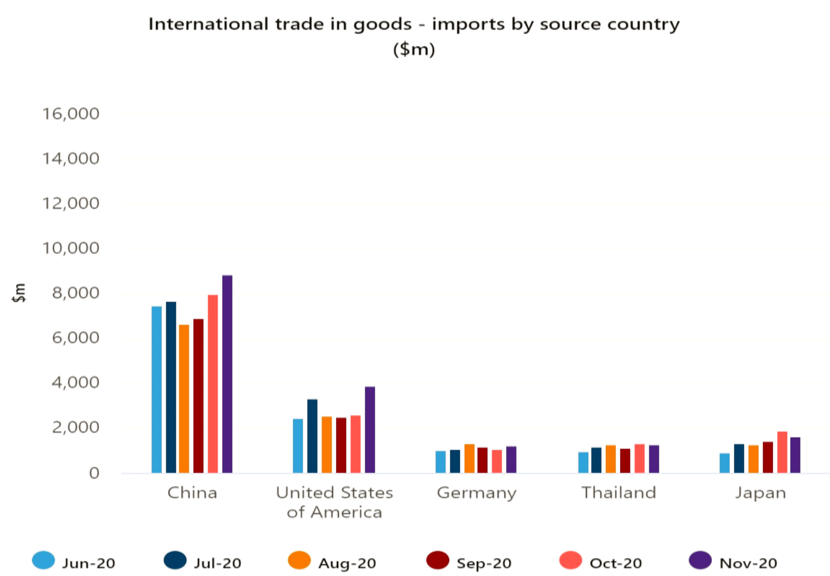
A detailed explanation of each area of cooperation between the two nations listed above and what each area of cooperation entails can be accessed from https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/Pages/joint-statement-comprehensive-strategic-partnership-between-republic-india-and-australia.

Trade between Australia and India

Seventy percent of Australia's trade is conducted with 14 nations under free trade agreements.[21] In other words, the bulk of Australian trade is covered under free trade agreements. Australia's top five import source nations during the past six months of 2020 are listed in Table 5.

[21]https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/trade-investment/business-envoy/december-2020/take-advantage-australias-free-trade-agreements

Table 5: Australia's Imports by source country



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, International Merchandise Trade, Preliminary, Australia November 2020

Four out of the five nations listed in the table have free trade agreements with Australia, except for Germany (which is part of the European Union). A free trade agreement with the European Union is currently under negotiation. Australia and India have been involved in negotiations for a free trade agreement for the past eight years. Both Prime Ministers Modi and Morrison have agreed to resume negotiations with the objective of achieving a breakthrough with the signing of a free trade agreement that is acceptable to both sides. A detailed breakdown of all trade and investment activities between Australia and India including two-way Foreign Direct Investment flows as registered during 2018-2019 is presented below:

Table 6 – Australia- India Trade and Investment

Australian merchandise trade with India, 2018-19 (A$m)	**Total share**	**Rank**	**Growth (yoy)**
Exports to India 16,207	4.3%	4th	-0.7%
Imports from India 4,924	1.5%	16th	-11.2%
Total merchandise trade (exports + imports) 21,131	3.0%	7th	-3.4%

Major Australian exports, 2018-19 (A$m)		**Major Australian imports, 2018-19 (A$m)**	
Coal	11,621	Refined petroleum	566
Natural gas	935	Railway vehicles (incl hovertrains)	471
Gold	578	Medicaments (incl veterinary)	393
Copper ores & concentrates	436	Pearls & gems	264
Australia's trade in services with India, 2018-19 (A$m)		**Total share Rank**	**Growth (yoy)**
Exports of services to India	6,629	6.8% 3rd	38.0%
Imports of services from India	2,581	2.5% 13th	5.3%
Major Australian services exports, 2018-19 (A$m)		**Major Australian services imports, 2018-19 (A$m)**	
Education-related travel	5,495	Personal travel excluding education	1,239
Personal travel excluding education	483	Professional, technical & other business	587
Australia's investment relationship with India, 2018 (A$m)		**Total**	***FDI***
Australia's investment in India		15,573	*1,619*
India's investment in Australia		15,149	*949*

Compiled by the Statistics Section, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, using the latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the International Monetary Fund and various international sources:

(a) Economic indicators data is from the IMF WEO where available, the EIU or other reputable source. Data may include forecasts or projections for recent years. GNI may be shown in lieu of GDP for countries where GDP data is unavailable.

(b) Merchandise trade data is based on published and unpublished ABS data. May exclude confidential items of trade. Totals may not add up due to rounding. Investment data is stocks as at end December.

All data may be subject to future revisions.

(Source: DFAT (2020) – details can be accessed at https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/inia-cef.pdf)

A closer look at Table 6 reveals that Australia exports primary goods required by Indian industry whereas the country's significant imports from India are predominantly value added or manufactured goods. The imports from India have been classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics under four headings namely: refined petroleum, railway vehicles, medicaments (including veterinary medicines), and pearls and gems. Out of these, railway vehicles may not be a regular import and is likely to be subject to need, whereas the imports under the other three categories are likely to continue to grow. Refined petroleum is an internationally competitive product of scale exported by large Indian oil refining companies and mostly a domain of India's PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGS. The other two imports from India (medicaments, pearls and gems) are an important area of growth for private Indian companies. If a broad comparison of the four import categories from India is made with the diverse categories of imports coming into Australia from all other countries, it reveals a range of opportunities for Indian companies to work on.

Imports into Australia are classified as

a) consumption goods,

b) capital goods,

c) intermediate and other merchandise goods, and

d) services.

The further breakdown under each of the aforesaid categories are summarised below in tables. These have been sourced[22] and adapted for presentation from the latest economic data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics with reference to the monthly imports for the period August to October 2020. The information within each table states the broad nature of imports. These are areas where Indian companies may be able to participate in a supply chain.

A. Consumption Goods (seasonally adjusted)

	Aug-20 ($m)	**Sep-20 ($m)**	**Oct-20 ($m)**
Total consumption goods	**9 266**	**8 917**	**9 064**
Food and beverages, mainly for consumption	1 382	1 338	1 376
Household electrical items	664	613	-538
Non-industrial transport equipment	1 789	1 820	1 918
Textiles, clothing and footwear	1 914	1 710	1 711
Toys, books and leisure goods	581	-565	591
Consumption goods n.e.s.	2 937	2 870	2 929

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells) n.e.s – not elsewhere specified

B. Capital goods (seasonally adjusted)

	Aug-20 ($m)	**Sep-20 ($m)**	**Oct-20 ($m)**
Total capital goods	6 100	5 885	5 980
Machinery and industrial equipment	2 090	2 090	2 047
ADP equipment	963	954	938
Telecommunications equipment	1 207	859	977
Civil aircraft and confidentialised items(b)(c)	105	247	114
Industrial transport equipment n.e.s.	951	998	1 068
Capital goods n.e.s.(d)	784	737	837

22 https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/international-trade/international-trade-goods-and-services-australia/latest-release#imports-of-goods-and-services-debits-

(a) For sign conventions, see the Explanatory notes.

(b) From July 2008, commodities subject to a 'no commodity details' or 'no value details' restriction are included in Civil aircraft and confidentialised items. For earlier periods, commodities subject to a 'no commodity details' or 'no value details' restriction are included in Other merchandise goods.

(c) This component is not seasonally adjusted.

(d) In using these seasonally adjusted series, care should be exercised because of the difficulties associated with reliably estimating the seasonal pattern.

C. Intermediate and other merchandise goods (seasonally adjusted)

	Aug-20 ($m)	**Sep-20 ($m)**	**Oct-20 ($m)**
Total intermediate and other merchandise goods	9 710	8 901	9 053
Food and beverages, mainly for industry	197	179	160
Primary industrial supplies n.e.s.	145	208	147
Fuels and lubricants(b)	2 118	1 731	1 782
Parts for transport equipment	1 085	1 076	1 073
Parts for ADP equipment	70	58	58
Other parts for capital goods	1 617	1 446	1 584
Organic and inorganic chemicals	252	271	272
Paper and paperboard	179	167	175
Textile yarn and fabrics	146	131	140
Iron and steel	272	262	233
Plastics	337	323	319
Processed industrial supplies n.e.s.	3 114	3 006	3 080
Other merchandise goods(c)(d)	166	28	21
Goods procured in ports by carriers(b)	11	15	10

(a) For sign conventions, see the Explanatory notes.

(b) From July 2008, commodities subject to a 'no commodity details' or 'no value details' restriction are included in Civil aircraft and confidentialised items. For earlier periods, commodities subject to a 'no commodity details' or 'no value details' restriction are included in Other merchandise goods.

(c) This component is not seasonally adjusted.

(d) In using these seasonally adjusted series, care should be exercised because of the difficulties associated with reliably estimating the seasonal pattern.

D. Services (seasonally adjusted)

	Aug-20 ($m)	**Sep-20 ($m)**	**Oct-20 ($m)**
Total services	3 740	3 677	3 692
Manufacturing services on physical inputs owned by others(b)	-	-	-
Maintenance and repair services n.i.e.(b)	24	34	44
Transport	978	910	969
Transport - Passenger(c)	31	28	31
Transport - Freight	929	865	921
Transport - Other(b)	9	9	9
Transport - Postal and courier services(d)(e)	9	-9	-8
Travel	50	41	50
Other services	2 688	2 691	2 629
Tourism related services debits	80	69	81

nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) For sign conventions, see the Explanatory Notes.

(b) This component is not seasonally adjusted.

(c) Passenger services includes agency fees and commissions for air transport.

(d) Postal and courier services includes indirect commissions for sea transport.

(e) In using these seasonally adjusted series, care should be exercised because of the difficulties associated with reliably estimating the seasonal pattern.

Future opportunities to develop trade and business with Australia

A careful review of Australia's imports as listed in the tables within the preceding section confirms tremendous scope for Indian companies to do business with Australia. This aspect was discussed at length with key stakeholders from various trade organisations such as the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Global Victoria[23], the trade arm of the Government of Victoria, Newland Global, a Sydney based corporate advisory firm and others that did not wish to be named. A summary of the most relevant discussions with a few direct quotes relating to the scope for developing supply chain relationships between companies of both India and Australia is presented below:

a) Bryan Clark, Director Trade and International Affairs, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry discussed areas where India and Australia could cooperate in building supply chains and grow trade between the two nations. Textile industry was identified as one such area. He felt that the textile industry is a potential area for developing trade between the two nations. Quoting Mr Clark, "*textile manufacturing in India is fantastic…and Australia has the fibre (wool)."* India's textile manufacturing prowess can be combined with high quality Australian wool to produce the best woollen fabric. This sector can be developed as a two-way chain of wool producers, manufacturers, exporters, importers, distributors and retailers between the two countries.

b) Mr Gopi Shankar, Trade and Industry Director from Global Victoria's Bengaluru office discussed at length the areas where companies from both countries and in particular those from the Australian state of Victoria and Indian companies can find areas of mutual interest and match their synergies to do business. Mr Gopi Shankar mentioned *"as*

[23] https://global.vic.gov.au/for-exporters/trade-missions/about-our-trade-missions

a consequence of the geo-political situation, a number of Victorian companies are looking at India and Indian companies as suppliers to de-risk their supply chain risks. Indian companies have already played an important role in supplying accessories to Victorian companies during the COVID crises which led to shortages of face masks and sanitisers in Australia." An Australian company's desire to de-risk a supply chain opens a wide range of possibilities for Indian companies to pursue. This is best pursued by reviewing the list of imports coming into Australia from various countries and then working out from there the areas of interest for Indian companies. Section details such areas of opportunity.

c) An Australian importer from the pharmaceutical industry felt "there are huge opportunities in pharma manufacturing and collaboration between Australian and Indian companies, India is a manufacturing powerhouse of pharmaceuticals, herbal, ayurvedic products which Australia can use… we should be looking at creating Indian and Australian partnerships between manufacturers, researchers, distributors which will reduce costs of procurement, transport, storage and more importantly India will prove to be a reliable supply line when things become difficult such as during COVID."

d) Another Australian importer and distributor dealing with a range of merchandise which the company supplies to retail in Australia expressed disappointment saying, "India has a range of competitively priced quality goods that I believe should be on the shelves of our supermarkets and places like 'Good Guys' and 'Harvey Norman', but we do not see much of Indian products except for the aisles of the Asian food products in supermarkets or the cushions in 'Spotlight' so why is this the case?" The same importer has attempted to import from India without much success for two reasons, namely:

   i) he was not able to establish successful channels of communication and supply with his Indian counterparts and

   ii) he had to work harder and offer more discounts to introduce Indian products to his Australian wholesale buyers (companies) who were reluctant to change the product that they usually sell.

e) An executive from an Indian company which set up operations in Australia mentioned how they reduced costs by importing a few containers of office equipment, store supplies, furniture, stationery etc. from India as they found the prices of similar products in the Australian market much higher than what they would normally pay in India, "…we invited quotes from local suppliers and were shocked at the prices we were quoted… we found it more economical to import and pay costs of freight and certain taxes as compared to buying locally and at the end we got the quality and value for money..."

It is apparent from the stakeholder interview excerpts that there is a positive perception on the ground for Indian-made goods. The conditions are conducive for Indian companies to develop business and seek supply chain relations with Australian companies.

Chapter 3

Supply Chain and Sectoral Opportunities for Indian Companies

This section provides information relating to opportunities that Indian companies can consider pursuing. The information is largely drawn from discussions with 15 stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, as well as Australian trade statistics and industry reports sourced from IBIS World.[24] The opportunities are to be seen not only from the perspective of exporting from India but from a broader perspective of creating supply chain relationships that operate upstream and downstream between companies at either end in India or Australia. Six industry sectors that offer substantial scope to do business and create supply chains with Australian counterparts are analysed here:

1. Pharmaceuticals

It is estimated that Australia will import $16 billion of pharmaceutical requirements from overseas during 2020-21 to satisfy about 73.2% of its needs (IBIS World, 2020). The bulk of Australia's imports are sourced from USA, UK, Germany, France, Ireland and Switzerland including smaller quantities from China and India. On the other hand, India ranks number 3 in the world for pharmaceutical production with over 3000 drug companies and 10,000 manufacturing units of varying sizes.[25] A key Australian stakeholder with many years of involvement with pharmaceutical imports from overseas felt that there is tremendous scope for Indian drug manufacturers, including bulk drug manufacturers, to supply to Australia. According to him, Indian pharmaceutical companies appear to have not truly looked at the Australian market's potential.

[24] https://www.ibisworld.com/au/list-of-industries/

[25] https://www.ibef.org/industry/pharmaceutical-india.aspx

2. Household electricals

The household electrical trade in Australia comprises of 4 large players who control approximately 20% of the market, while over 85% of the market is catered to by small businesses who generate an annual revenue of $2 million each on an average (IBIS World, 2020). Most of the products sold in the Australian retail market are sourced from China.

India manufactures a wide range of quality household electricals which places Indian companies in a position to play a significant role in creating value-based supply chains by offering superior quality products to Australian buyers.

3. Textiles and fabric

The industry is classified as 'textile wholesale, textile product manufacturers (cut and sewn textile product manufacturing), synthetic and natural fabric manufacturing (wool and cotton), cotton ginning, carpet and textile floor covering manufacturing. The industry has been hit by low-cost imports in almost all sectors of the industry and Australian manufacturing has declined over the years. Imports in different categories largely come from China with smaller amounts from countries such as India and Bangladesh. Consultants engaged in trade facilitation felt that Indian companies can cater to the needs of the cut and sewn textile product manufacturing sector and supply them with fabric much superior to what is being currently purchased.

4. Chemicals and allied products

Stakeholders with industry knowledge confirmed that chemical manufacturing (both organic and inorganic) industry in Australia is on the decline due to cheaper imports from China and other countries. The industrial consumer largely depends on direct imports or the wholesale sector to supply their needs. Good relations with wholesalers within the industry holds the key to ensuring regular and quality supplies from the perspective of an industrial consumer. In general terms, Indian companies can play a significant role in a supply chain in this area.

The top four industry players are projected to account for less than 20% of industry revenue in 2020-21, demonstrating the industry's low concentration level. The industry is fragmented in nature and includes a range of goods distributed to many industries, ranging from the agriculture sector to downstream service industries (IBIS World, 2020). Within the industry there are various segments, with the strength of players varying between segments. In the industrial gas segment, BOC is a major player, while in the polymer segment BASF and DowDuPont dominate the market. The industrial explosives market is largely with Orica, while the agricultural chemicals segment is with the US-owned Koch Fertiliser Australia Pty Ltd. (IBIS World, 2020).

5. Plastics

This is another industry that holds promise for Indian companies. Over sixty percent of the plastic industry requirements in various segments come from China (IBIS World, 2020). The industry is price sensitive and imports from China have led to the decline of the local manufacturing in the plastics sector (includes industrial plastics). The industry report from IBIS World (2020) forecasts that Australian plastics industry will decline by an annualised 1.4% over the five years through 2024-25 with a dollar value of $3.1 billion, due to cheaper imports and a rising Australian dollar. One stakeholder engaged in import trade with exposure to the industry felt that Indian companies have an opportunity that has been overlooked.

6. Footwear industry

Australia manufactures high quality footwear, including steel tipped protective industrial footwear which it currently exports. The industry has changed largely due the impact of free trade agreements signed by Australia that enabled cheaper imported footwear to enter the Australian market. The industry caters to various segments with the more specialised and expensive brands under the control of local manufacturers. Even with the local manufacturers, there is a tendency to outsource manufacturing to cheaper locations. The outsourcing part is an opportunity for Indian footwear manufacturers to look at. In addition, direct Indian footwear imports have not penetrated the market as much as footwear from Vietnam and China. This sector provides opportunities for Indian companies to consider tying up with Australian counterparts for both manufacturing offshore for Australian companies as well as exporting and distributing under Indian brands.

7. Tourism

Tourism offers tremendous scope for developing partnerships between tourism sectors of both economies. Tourism Australia, a Government of Australia's tourism promotion body notes, "In 2019, India was Australia's fastest growing market for visitor spend. India is Australia's seventh largest inbound market for visitor arrivals, 6th largest market for total visitor spend and second for visitor nights[26]." The pandemic has placed a temporary halt to this growth. Nevertheless, post pandemic as global tourism picks up again, both India and Australia have a lot to offer visitors from either nation.

Indian companies interested in exploring tourism opportunities and partnerships with Australian counterparts are able to visit and access relevant resources from Tourism Australia's website at https://www.tourism.australia.com/en/markets-and-stats/market-regions/south-and-south-east-asia/india.html

In addition to the seven major sector opportunity areas discussed above, other areas of mutual cooperation in developing supply chain relationships were discussed with the interviewees. These areas of possible cooperation to develop upstream and downstream supply chains are presented in Table 7 with observations and comments made by the stakeholders (some have been named as they consented to be named):

Table 7: Other Supply chain opportunities

Area of business cooperation to create supply chain relations	Stakeholder inputs and observations
Ayurvedic and herbal products	This is a largely untapped market. Indian herbal and ayurvedic products are plant based and will appeal more than chemical and animal based alternate products selling in the Australian market. The market is largely untapped by Indian companies as there is no visible marketing effort. Small quantity of imports made by Indian grocery distributors at this stage.

[26] https://www.tourism.australia.com/en/markets-and-stats/market-regions/south-and-south-east-asia/india.html

Education technology market development with Indian partners	A stakeholder involved in trade consultation and facilitation confirmed that Australian companies and institutions are seeking reliable partners in India to collaborate on education learning platforms. The purpose is to help real time learning for students at both ends. upGrad, an Indian higher education online learning platform, has recently launched online MBA programs in collaboration with universities from various parts of the world including Australia.[27]
Environment cooperation and Climate change	This area offers scope for partnering in an area of mutual interest with manufacturing in India. During stakeholder interviews this topic came up several times with three key stakeholders who felt that a lot could be done in this area through private-to-private cooperation. Manufacturing facilities in India can support a reliable supply chain. Wind turbines made by Suzlon India which are in operation in Australia came up as a great example of such cooperation.
Australian companies seeking to de-risk their supply chains by tying up with counterparts in India.	There are many opportunities for Indian and Australian business to collaborate. Mr Gopi Shankar, Trade and Industry Director, Global Victoria mentioned that a large number of Victorian companies are looking at India and Indian companies as suppliers to de-risk their supply chain

[27] https://www.upgrad.com/au/mba-imt-deakin-university

	risks. This means business opportunities are there for Indian companies in a wide range of products and services that can be tapped. He further mentioned that "Indian companies played an important role in supplying accessories to Victorian companies during the COVID crisis which led to shortages of face masks and sanitisers in Australia."
Digital cooperation	Multiple possibilities exist for companies of both nations to collaborate in the area of online education, knowledge sharing platforms, collaborative research and run back office support services. The example of ANZ, an Australian bank was discussed. ANZ draws on digital support services from a subsidiary office in Bengaluru, India.
Sporting services	Stakeholders involved in import trade mentioned that the sports industry offers substantial scope for manufacturing of sports goods in India. Likewise, Australian companies and education institutions are well positioned to conduct sports coaching and training programs, as well as assist with Sports management training education, build sporting venues and provide a range of support services for sports bodies and sports teams. This is an area which has been hardly looked at.
Agricultural cooperation	Historically, there has been cooperation in the area of agriculture and dairy farming between the two nations. Nevertheless, there is plenty

	of scope to create collaborative ventures to increase food production per hectare with lesser inputs, achieve water efficiency and share research on pulses, seeds for fruits and vegetables and wheat. Collaborative ventures in dairy and poultry are another area that came up for discussion with stakeholders in the know of the sector.
Solar Energy	Indian companies can play an important role in reducing costs of solar energy products, such as solar panels, in Australia. The bulk of imports come from China with a small amount of locally produced solar plates and solar batteries. There is scope for Indian companies to collaborate and create supply chains with Australian companies in this sector.
Strategic Minerals	A few stakeholders felt that there is scope to build deeper business relations in the strategic minerals sector and Australia can be a long-term reliable supplier of strategic minerals to India as well as India could process some of the raw minerals as a value added product. Joint efforts can be made in this area to link sound supply chains.
Medical Technology	Stakeholders familiar with the pharma industry and trade facilitation believe that collaborative ventures with supply chains extending to India will reduce overall costs without compromising on quality of products. India has the capability to deliver.

Australian Wine and Indian Hospitality Industry	Indian hospitality industry imports top end wine from Australia. Austrade, the trade development arm of the Australian Government mentions that India imports about 22.64% of its wine from Australia.[28] The wine market is growing in India offering scope for new players from both nations to consider building winery and distribution partnerships.

Besides the future possibilities discussed with stakeholders and reported in the preceding section, several Indian and Australian companies already appear to collaborate very successfully, as is evident from the business experiences of Suzlon Australia – a subsidiary of Suzlon India supplying wind turbines to generate wind energy in Australia. More about the success of Suzlon, an Indian company with operation in Australia can be read at https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/chapter-2.html. Synapse, an Indian company providing administrative support services for Australian hospitals and clinics, can also be read about at https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/chapter-8.html. These are just two of the many examples of various forms of collaboration between companies from both nations.

In addition to the supply chain and sectoral opportunities that came up during interview with key stakeholders and have been discussed in this section, the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) released their Australia Economic Strategy Report[29] in December 2020. The report lists 12 major areas that Indian and Australian companies can consider for collaborative ventures. The CII report is a response to the Australia's 2018 India Economic Strategy to 2035 Report.[30] It proposes building on synergies at each end combining the best of both nations' raw materials, research, technical know-how, skills manufacturing abilities and consumer markets.

[28] https://www.austrade.gov.au/news/insights/insight-uncorking-the-growing-wine-market-in-india
[29] https://aes2020.in/executive-summary/key-opportunity-areas/
[30] https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/index.html

Chapter 4

Stakeholder views: Impediments to Trade and Business

Trade between Australia and India is not just about conducting commercial transactions but involves people-to-people relationships from both nations which are enriched over time through endearing experiences. Bryan Clark, Director Trade and International Affairs, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who had spent time in India working with the Punjab Agricultural University aptly captured his personal sentiment for India in these words "*India has the most wonderful food itself, and I think Australians love Indian food. The culture of India pervades interest in Australia. Then you've got the sound, the music, the fashion, the dancing and the enthusiasm of the Indian people. There's so much to build on, and it's so frustrating that we're not able to do more than we do.*" In a broad sense, this statement captures the Australian desire to do more with India than what has been done so far. This report echoes a similar sentiment with the hope that we do more than what we have done so far. While working towards that goal of doing more and increasing trade between India and Australia, it is important to consider impediments and obstacles that companies and individuals at both ends believe we need to overcome.

This section discusses impediments to business and trade development in general as discussed with various stakeholders. A range of perceptions and obstacles, both perceived and real, came up as a matter of discussion and reflection during the interviews with key stakeholders. Most of the quotes are drawn from the interviews with stakeholders who narrated their personal experiences. It does not necessarily reflect the views of any organisation they represent. The excerpts from the interviews quoted here have been de-identified in the discussion (except where the stakeholder has consented to be identified) as these are personal views of stakeholders based on their experiences of business between the two nations.

Systemic impediments to doing business (Australia and India)

Delays in signing the Australia-India Free Trade Agreement

Most of the stakeholders interviewed touched on the proposed Australia-India Free Trade Agreement and expressed frustration and regret about the delay in signing the agreement. There appeared to be a consensus among key stakeholders that if India and Australia are able to agree on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), it will provide the impetus to growth of trade and business between the two nations. This is a shared view across most stakeholders. However, one stakeholder who has consented to be named, provided a more detailed explanation. Ms. Natasha Jha Bhaskar from Newland Global, a Sydney based corporate advisory firm focussing on bilateral trade between India and Australia, explained that *"the Indian experience with FTAs has been bitter. India has bilateral FTA's with ASEAN, Korea, and Japan --- of them its trade deficit has widened from $9 billion in 2005 to $83 billion in 2017, of which, China alone accounts for over 60% of the deficit. Also, an Asian Development Bank reported the percentage of India's international trade routed through preferential trading arrangements or FTAs is very low, between 5% and 25%, which is one of the lowest in Asia. Because of complex rules of origin criteria, a lack of information about FTA's, higher compliance costs, and administrative delays all serve to dissuade exporters from using preferential routes. This is very unlike Australia, where the proportion of Australian trade covered by free trade agreements is around 70 per cent, up from around 27 per cent in 2013."*

Nevertheless, she felt that there is substantial scope for both nations to work on "*Other measures that need immediate attention include tariff and non-tariff barriers, customs and enhanced agriculture/dairy market access, Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) issues, market access for goods and the movement of professionals, mutual recognition of qualifications, trade openness-logistic infrastructure-cost, time and efficiency of doing business are other areas."*

India's refusal to sign the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)[31]

The RCEP has created the world's largest trading bloc comprising of the 10 members states of the ASEAN (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos,

[31] https://rcepsec.org/ - provides details of the agreement.

Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), Australia, China, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.[32] India had initially intended to be part of RCEP. However, India could not proceed with signing the agreement as India's concerns were not addressed (for details refer to the statement issued by India's Commerce Minister, Mr. Piyush Goyal).[33]

A few of the stakeholders who were interviewed, felt that India's refusal to sign the RCEP may not help India's interests in the region with one stakeholder expressing "*It's really interesting that India claims to want the sorts of aspirations other nations do, and when it has the chance to, it withdraws (and has done so historically in the WTO as well). It is known to be one of the nations which is most difficult to reach any agreement with. It is curious, about India's aspirations compared to what their actual policy positions seem to be."* Another key stakeholder felt that India's not signing the RCEP was more linked to geopolitics rather than commerce *"India and the reasons it didn't go for RCEP was because of tensions with China in the end."* Ms. Natasha Jha Bhaskar from Newland Global felt that India's non-signing of the RCEP should not have any impact on India-Australia trade prospects and the bilateral agreements between India and Australia should work well. Quoting her, *"Unlike multilateral trade platforms, like RCEP – bilateral trade agreements provide an opportunity for hard bargain and open discussions to each other's concerns. The Australia and India free trade deal, which is known as the Australia-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, can provide an alternative engagement opportunity beyond RCEP. One way to make FTAs work is to negotiate the new ones in a more informed manner, address sticking issues concerning market access, non-tariff barriers, services trade. Goods, services, investment focused FTA with Australia will boost key Indian exports like textiles, clothing, auto parts and jewellery."*

Frequency of exchange of Trade missions and delegations

A need to have more exchanges of trade missions and delegations with specific focus on industries, sectors and outcomes was expressed by key stakeholders. It was generally felt that both nations needed to exchange more visits and increase the frequency of those visits.

[32] https://rcepsec.org/#

[33] https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/rcep-did-not-address-outstanding-issues-concerns-of-india-piyush-goyal/articleshow/72145744.cms?from=m

Ms. Natasha Jha Bhaskar from Newland Global, a key stakeholder in the area of trade development between the two nations, analysed last year's (2020) visit by a 120 member trade delegation, one of the largest Australian trade delegations to India, led by Minister for Trade, Investment and Tourism of the Australian Government, Mr. Simon Birmingham thus: "*The narrative on the success of business missions should be driven by outcomes, than the delegation size. It will be meaningful to focus on outcomes and how individual businesses have maximised their returns post visit, along with follow up visits and activities to advance co-operation, discuss potential future projects, identify business and mutual investment opportunities and reinforce the economic objectives of bilateral co-operation. This isn't reflected in the true potential of our economic ties. India is too big to ignore, and one must not leave any stone unturned to find ways to engage with India. Despite the size and scale of the Indian market, it remains largely ignored as a destination for foreign investment by Australian companies. In 2018, only about 0.6 per cent of Australian outbound investment was allocated to India, less than that allocated to countries such as Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Bermuda and Papua New Guinea. India's economic growth, its appetite for resources, energy demand, skill development, technical know-how and investment has made it a market full of potential and opportunities.*

Contrast the aforesaid analysis in January 2021 by Ms. Jha Bhaskar with an article full of optimism written by her in March 2020 for Business Today.[34] It does raise the question as to what needs to be done differently to make things work, especially when both nations share so much of goodwill? This question was posed to another key stakeholder involved in building trade relations between the two nations, in the context of cooperation and how more trade could be achieved in various sectors of mutual interest. The stakeholder's response captures the serious need for deeper interaction, "*India has a very strong approach around services trade, which is fantastic: wanting to get out the skilled base that India offers the world, it's a good level of education across its people these days. But it was unwilling, then, in order to deal with the trade-off for that to open its agricultural sector up, the agri-food marketplace, for example. And in some respects, India has also had an attitude towards self-sufficiency on food and agriculture for some time, and its misplaced. What we're terribly interested in is where is the economics*

[34] https://www.businesstoday.in/opinion/columns/australia-india-business-and-trade-exchange-import-export-economy-partnership-investment/story/397535.html

community in India that's assisting India to understand how it will be much better off opening its markets up, as it's attempting to do externally to its services industry (which is very valuable) and allow alternate sources of food and other things into its marketplace? And related to that then is an investment question, where it is very difficult to invest in India, for example in supermarkets and other sectors."

Another stakeholder felt that the groundwork by trade delegations did work well for them: *"The key factors which have helped us develop trade with India is having those government and trade bodies, because they have helped us make those connections."*

These stakeholder views from both ends of the spectrum essentially reflect the need to communicate better and reach mutually acceptable agreements despite the good work being done. Growth in trade cannot be achieved without an increase in the frequency and exchange of trade delegations between the two nations. In addition, the benefits and drawbacks of working with governments and government bodies were also touched on several times by different stakeholders. It was felt that governments of Australia and India have proven useful through financial support and providing opportunities for broadening networks. However, the impermanence of governments and administrations and changes in policy or delays in implementation of announcements are a hindrance in maintaining a steady relationship for the business community. New administrations tend to bring with them new employees who must play catch-up, thereby nullifying the impact of any prior investment in time and effort on part of businesses to develop trade and business as well the time spent in building connections with government bodies.

Perceived Impediments or Obstacles to doing business (Australia and India)

Perception of Indian companies in general reported by stakeholders:

The most relevant quotes from various stakeholder interviews drawing on their experiences of trade with Australia (either their own or that of their organisation's) are discussed here.

1. Indian companies engaged in importing from various markets including Australia feel that *"Australian companies may not be able to deliver in*

large quantities" although *"Australian quality is good – no doubt about it"* and *"Brand Australia is liked by consumers and by India in general."*

2. One key stakeholder touched on a number of perceptions that does not help Australia in securing business in India. These are:

   a) *"Indian supermarket chains feel that Australian companies are traditionally small and not able to take on supply levels to meet the demand of the Indian market."*

   b) *"Australian companies are not so much interested and invested in developing business in India."*

   c) *"Australian companies are transactional and rigid with their expectations."*

3. There was a general consensus between key stakeholders that although there was *"lot of warmth and goodwill for Australia in India"; "Australian products and services are not competitively priced and are perceived as expensive compared to US or European ones",* as well as that Australian companies do not seem to be open for negotiations ("*Australian companies seem to have a take it or leave it attitude in negotiations.").*

4. Another key stakeholder commented that "*building cultural intelligence is integral to sound business strategy. Australian businesses lack India literacy, and disconnect with India's growth story and the strides it has made across diverse sectors remains a major challenge. It is primarily based on anecdotal assumptions, prejudiced generalisations and archaic opinions."*

Perception of Australian companies reported by stakeholders:

The most relevant quotes from various stakeholders drawn from their experiences of doing business with India (either their own or that of their organisation's) are discussed here:

1. Almost all stakeholders felt that *"Government bureaucracy takes up a lot of time and increases costs"* and decision-makers in the Indian government need to take a second look at processes to reduce time and increase convenience of doing business with India. The urgent need for simplification of processes was described by a company currently expanding their operations in India thus: "*We've also worked*

with Austrade many times, and through various departments of government here, we also meet some of the partners from India and other countries, who help us better understand what's happening. But having more information and more bodies who can help unfold the 'doing business' in India bit – legal requirements, tax formalities, registering the company – how can that be eased? I think India is becoming slightly easier than before, but it is a bit of a hard system. In Australia, it's very easy to register a company, register for tax. In India, that's not very clear and remains a puzzle."

2. Five stakeholders particularly commented on the inability of Indian companies to stick to commitments of timely shipment and delivery. One stakeholder provided an example of an Australian buyer who liked the quality and fabric from a company in Tirupur, India but could not continue further business as delivery schedules were erratic saying that *"Indian suppliers are not able to deliver in time for a number of reasons"* and usually there is a "*lack of communication in advance about possible delays, it is sprung as a surprise".* It is obvious that delays in shipment means losses for Australian buyers which does not augur well for repeat or long-term business for Indian companies.

3. Another Australia based company dealing in paper and paper products and a major player in the domestic Australian market narrated their import experiences from India. "*Most of our imports are from China and S. Korea with very little from India", "In the past we tried various manufacturers and exporters from India and were disappointed with the delays in shipment, the inconsistencies in communication, our worst experience being one where the price was agreed upon and then raised when the company in India when they realised that we needed the product badly and could not do without it." "Later, we shifted that order to a S. Korean company and have never had any problems."*

4. *"Regulatory issues and delays"* were a point of discussion and blame for those dealing with imports from India. This was cited as an issue that resulted in cost blowouts.

5. From the discussions, it came up that generally Australian companies lack confidence in buying from India. This low level of trust stems mainly from:

a) Perceived difficulty of communicating/working with Indian companies.

b) Perceived low quality of Indian products.

c) Delays in shipment.

Furthermore, this doesn't apply to all sectors, as these perceptions do not apply to the Information Technology sector where Australian companies seem to be satisfied with their counterparts in India.

Chapter 5
Recommendations

This section provides recommendations to explore and establish business relationships between private entities and businesses. The recommendations have drawn on various resources, namely interviews and discussions with key stakeholders who are engaged in business between the two nations, case studies of companies who have successfully engaged in business between India and Australia and relevant secondary data drawn from sources listed under references. The recommendations reflect the author's synthesis of all the information collected over a short period of five months while conducting research on this topic. However, the recommendations are provided with a disclaimer. The recommendations are not to be relied upon as business advice. If one intends to act on these recommendations, one should conduct due diligence and enquiries before making any business decisions. The author does not take any responsibility for making these recommendations or for interpretations made of these recommendations by a reader. It is left to the best judgement of the reader.

1. Adopting a supply chain approach

Most stakeholders felt that the concept of creating supply chains of goods and services that runs between the two countries as proposed in this report by the author is an excellent and holistic way to look at trade development. For instance, marrying India's textile manufacturing prowess, the 'Make in India' program with Australian wool is a "sure fire winner" as one stakeholder commented. The essence of developing further trade between the two nations has been captured aptly in Mr. Bryan Clark's[35] statement on what has been achieved by Australia in the case of Australia and Indonesia by asking *"'How do we join our two economies?' The concept of a comprehensive economic partnership to the business community meant how do you link our economies and businesses together so that they then face the world together?"* He felt the same question of *"how do we join our two economies?"*

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[35]. Mr. Bryan Clark, Director - Trade and International Affairs, Australian Chamber's International Chamber of Commerce Policy Unit 2020, Interviewed by Dr. Achinto Roy.
(Mr Bryan Clark leads the Australian Chamber's International Chamber of Commerce Policy Unit as Director- Trade and International Affairs)

could be the operational principle in the context of trade development between Australia and India. The supply chain approach is already in operation in some sectors of trade between India and Australia such as the technical and office support services provided by ANZ Bengaluru to ANZ Bank, Australia.[36]

2. International Quality Certifications and Benchmarking

Indian companies who intend to export or participate as long term suppliers to Australian companies should benchmark their products or services against international quality certifications and standards and ensure that it is conveyed in promotions and marketing communication. This will help in establishing supply chain relations. Australian buying companies will feel confident if international quality certifications are available. This is a general consensus among stakeholders in Australia who were involved in importing from India.

3. Improved Banking services

A few stakeholders called for improved or seamless banking services that did not leave them with high bank charges and delays. To avoid banking delays and problems that has been experienced with banking transactions in general, it is recommended that both Indian and Australian counterparts use banks that have direct ground presence in both countries. Banks with correspondent but different banks may not be the best option for smooth banking.

4. Model Supply chains

Supply chains established by Apple and Indian suppliers can act as a model for Indian companies who intend to emulate the success experienced by Indian companies dealing with Apple. The same underlying principles can be replicated by Indian companies while dealing with Australian buyers. This is an area where companies from both sides may access advisory services or experts to draw up functional supply chains that deliver on cost and time savings.

[36] https://institutional.anz.com/countries/india/en/bengaluru-service-centre

5. Avoidance of overpromising and shipment delays

Australian importers prefer to work with Indian exporters or suppliers who have established supply chains and have control over timing of shipment of orders. The issue of delays in shipment of orders and changes in supply content, quantity etc. were a subject of concern for Australian importers.

6. Pre-shipment Quality Inspection offer

Offer of inspection and certification of product quality being sent from India will help in a big way as some importers have experienced shipments with lower quality of products being received. As a consequence of their experience, they have not dealt with the same companies again. This does not bode well for companies from both nations and needs to be addressed.

7. Regular and clear communication

Lack of timely responses and communication is perceived as a problem area. It is further recommended that communication should be consistent, regular and transparent all throughout i.e., from the time one seeks the order right up to the point when the shipment is delivered to the buyer. A few Indian key stakeholders felt that Australian buyers are transactional while Australian importers felt that Indian companies fall short of what was agreed upon, and as a consequence Australian companies look for an alternate supply source from another country.

8. Cultural nuances in communication

It emerged from stakeholder discussions that at times communication and cultural nuances are missed. One stakeholder commented *"The way we communicate in Australia is very different to the way we communicate in India."* Another stakeholder of Indian origin, living in Australia and working for an Australian company mentioned that *"what we have experienced and what has helped these companies grow in India is actually working with someone like me, who has an understanding of that market, and who can play that intermediary role between the two sides."* A key stakeholder narrated their experience of doing business with India and how their lack of understanding of India affected them "*Things move at a much faster pace in India than in Australia. Many a time our business deals haven't gone through because our time for response has been much longer than what is the norm in India, and people have thought there isn't enough commitment, or we aren't geared* *enough for the Indian market. In India, things are much more agile – and that could be true for Asia, because Asia has a sort of a different culture, I think new age companies in Australia are working differently – but some of the traditional bodies or companies, the way we are set up and our professional culture in Australia is quite different from the professional culture in India. So, I think having that understanding is also important."*

9. Australia- India E- Commerce Platform

In addition to the above recommendations that have largely emerged from stakeholder interviews, one cannot help but notice the tremendous interest and activity on both sides to take things forward and expand trade and business between the two nations. It is the author's recommendation that an e-commerce platform be set up for Australian and Indian companies to virtually meet and collaborate. This can be created under a program by both governments or their agencies or by a private company as a commercial venture. Such a platform will enable both Australian and Indian companies to meet on the platform virtually and assess the potential role that each one can play in establishing or participating in a supply chain of goods and services. Such a platform is likely to generate a private-to-private cooperation which is the fastest way to achieve growth in trade. Firm-to-firm interactions are essentially people-to-people interactions, which are thus likely to generate a range of benefits including an expansion of the knowledge base of capabilities at both ends. In addition, the experiences of participating companies will contribute to policy adjustments and greater cost efficiencies.

10. An Australia-India Private Trade Arbitration Body

It is the author's recommendation that an arbitration body made up of members of various trade bodies from India and Australia may be set up with the express purpose of resolving private trade complaints and disputes. Such a body will be a good feedback point for cross checking references and is likely to operate as a deterrence against misdemeanours. An arbitration body is likely to ensure that businesses at both ends behave in accordance with principles of trust, fair play and transparency in dealings.

11. Peer support for Trade Facilitation

Stakeholders felt that peer support should be extended to companies from either country in exploring opportunities. In addition to the work being done by Australian and Indian governmental agencies, the Australia-India Business Council and other trade facilitation agencies, private companies and consultants, it is important to create peer support opportunities within specific industry sectors as that will help identify opportunities and partners.

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Appendix 1

Useful links to resources

1. The most comprehensive report written from an Australian perspective to engage in business with India is '**An India Economic Strategy to 2035: A report to the Australian Government'** by Mr Peter N. Varghese AO available for download at https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/index.html

2. **Case Studies of successful Australian and Indian companies** who are engaged in business between the two countries can be sourced from different reports. Readers of the report who are interested in delving deeper to understand case studies of successful companies can follow the link https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/trade-investment/india-new-economy-old-economy/Pages/case-studies-by-sector . This link takes you to the Australian government's Department of Foreign affairs and trade (DFAT) and provides a range of case studies of companies from India and Australia by industry sector and geographical location.

3. **Confederation of Indian Industry's Report on Australia Economic Strategy 2020** can be accessed from https://aes2020.in/

4. **Key bilateral political documents** and text relating to these can be accessed from DFAT website at https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india

5. For companies located in Victoria, Australia interested in expanding their operations to India or connecting with Indian companies: https://global.vic.gov.au/

Appendix 2

List of Questions used in semi-structured interviews

(not used for all stakeholders as questions were customised to the stakeholder's business or role)

1. Are you currently involved in trade between Australia and India as a manufacturer/buyer/ importer or seller/ exporter of goods and/or services?
2. If yes, please explain the nature of trade that you are engaged in and for how long?
3. If no, do you have any intention to develop trade with India? Do you import from any other country at present?
4. What are the factors that have helped you develop trade with India? (factors such as products, services, contacts, support from the government/trade body, personal contacts, export incentives, subsidies).
5. Do you see further scope to expand your operations and trade with India? The areas where you see possibilities and how those could be developed further?
6. Can you please tell me something about your own experience of doing business/ importing/ buying from India?
7. Have you visited India?
8. Has your organisation received assistance from trade bodies such as Austrade or any other trade body to facilitate business with India?
9. What, in your opinion, governments or trade bodies of both countries could do to enhance trade in your sector in general and assist your organisation in particular?
10. Is there scope for Indian companies to supply goods and services that you may already be importing from another country? (question for an Australian organisation)

11. Have you considered buying from Indian companies and establishing a supply chain for the goods or service that you import? (question for an Australian organisation)
12. Any application for tenders for supply to India that you may have made or considered during the past 3 years? (question for an Australian organisation)
13. Any incentive schemes for export to India that you are aware of? (question for an Australian organisation)
14. Do you import goods and services from India or another country? (as applicable)
15. Have you considered buying from other companies from India except your own? (question for an organisation of Indian origin with Australian operations/ presence)
16. Any application for tenders for supply to Australia that you may have made or considered during the past 3 years? (question for an organisation of Indian origin with Australian operations/ presence)
17. Any incentive schemes for export to India that you are aware of? (question for an organisation of Indian origin with Australian operations/ presence)
18. What are the typical areas where Indian companies can find opportunities to collaborate with Australian companies?
19. From your own experience dealing with Australia- India partnerships in business, what are the obstacles or impediments that we need to remove? This could be legal, cultural or anything that comes to your mind.
20. Perceptions of Indian companies in Australia and vice versa– comments invited
21. Trade delegations and exchanges between the two nations – how effective and beneficial have these been?
22. What role can India play to connect and leverage the presence of the Indian Diaspora in Australia? – How much is being done? How much more can be done?

23. Can you please give some idea about prospective areas for Indian companies to consider for export of products or services to Australia on competitive terms?
24. Any thoughts or ideas related to development of more trade between the two countries that you would like to share?
25. Indian diplomacy is changing its stance- will this help strengthen political and thereby commercial ties with Australia – how? (question was asked to a few stakeholders who were involved in trade facilitation roles)
26. India did not sign the RCEP agreement recently for reasons relating to transparency in trade as explained by India- Will this impact trade between Australia and India? (question was asked to a few stakeholders who were involved in trade facilitation roles)
27. What is the future for growth of trade between the two nations? (question was asked to a few stakeholders who were involved in trade facilitation roles)
28. Do you believe that people-to-people connections have built a lot of goodwill between the two nations? (question was asked to a few stakeholders who were involved in trade facilitation roles)
29. Will Australia and India sign a Free Trade Agreement? Will it help both nations?
30. Anything else that you would like to discuss or share from your own experiences/ ideas/ thoughts?