

Title: UK: Trade: Media reports of former prime minister Tony Abbott appointment to the UK Board of Trade

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To: Canberra

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Files:

References: The cable has the following attachment/s -
SUN.pdf
SUN 2.pdf
s33(a)(iii)
s33(a)(iii)

Response: Routine, Information Only

Summary

A UK newspaper has reported that former Australian prime minister Tony Abbott has been appointed as co-president of the UK's Board of Trade. There has been no official confirmation to date, including from Trade Secretary Liz Truss, the current President of the Board. s33(a)(iii) & s47E(d)

s33(a)(iii)

On 26 August, The Sun newspaper reported that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson had appointed former Australian prime minister Tony Abbott as co-president of the UK Board of Trade.

2. The Board of Trade is an historic body, revitalised in 2017 by then-Trade Secretary Liam Fox after being dormant for many years. In its current iteration, the Board notionally meets quarterly (although the last meeting was in May 2019) s33(a)(iii)

Post understands that the Board of Trade in its current iteration consists of Trade Secretary Liz Truss and three other members of Cabinet s33(a)(iii) & s47E(d)

3. Truss and the Department for International Trade have not commented on the Sun's report. The Shadow Trade Secretary Emily Thornberry today published an incendiary attack on Abbott in the UK media (attached). The High Commissioner is considering the best manner in which to respond.

text ends

Sent by: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Printed by s22(1)(a)(ii)

[REDACTED]
- 04:58 PM Wednesday, 11 November 2020

LH640500L

Prepared

s22(1)(a)(ii)

by:

Approved

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by:

Topics:

TRADE/Policy General

s47E(d)

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SENATE

Senator Timothy Ayres - UK Board of Trade (TTIM question)

(Question No. 1885)

Tim Ayres : asked the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment on **3 September 2020** :

With reference to the candidacy of former Prime Minister, Mr Tony Abbott, for the role of Joint President of the United Kingdom's Board of Trade:

1. Has the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment made any representations to the UK Government about Mr Abbott's candidacy for the role; if so, on how many occasions and when were they made.
2. Have any Australian Government resources been applied to support Mr Abbott's candidacy for the role; if so, what resources have been applied and what has been the total cost of supporting Mr Abbott's candidacy.

Minister Birmingham - the answer to the honourable member's question is as follows:

1. There is no such position as Joint President of the Board of Trade. The Minister has made no such representations.
2. No.