



# TRADE TALK

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## Australia records first trade surplus since 2011

Australia has recorded a seasonally adjusted trade surplus of \$307 million in March. The surplus, the first since December 2011, was driven by strong demand from our Asian trading partners and a fall in imports. Exports in both goods and services expanded, lead by growth in resources exports, up 2.1% on the previous month.

Press Release: [Engagement with Asia helps trade balance back into surplus](#)

## WTO: Cuba files tobacco dispute against Australia

Cuba has requested consultations with Australia over Australia's plain packaging laws for sales of tobacco. The request formally initiates a dispute and makes Cuba the fourth country to dispute the plain packaging law through the WTO.

WTO: [Dispute against Australia on tobacco plain packaging](#)

## Brazilian candidate to be next WTO Chief

Brazil's Ambassador to the WTO, Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo will be the next Director General of the WTO. WTO officials confirmed his appointment, stating that he carried the largest support throughout all three rounds of selection. Azevêdo will take-up his post on September 1 and will be the first Latin-American in the organisation's history to hold the position.

WTO General Council: [Carvalho de Azevêdo to be the next WTO Director-General](#)

## Azevêdo on critical issues facing the WTO

WTO Director General elect, Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo responds to the issues directly affecting the organisation, giving an insight towards how he will approach his role as WTO Chief.

Bridges Weekly: [Global Challenges and the Future of the WTO](#)

## IMF outlook on Asia and Pacific

Growth in Asia and the Pacific is set to increase according to a report by the IMF, with growth in the region predicted to reach 5.75% for 2013. Australia is tipped to have the highest growth rate amongst the 'Industrialised Asian Economies' (Australia, Japan and New Zealand) at 3%.

Publication: [Regional Economic Outlook: Asia and Pacific](#)

## Trade Facilitation Indicators reveal billions could be saved

The OECD has released its Trade Facilitation Indicators showing that billions could be injected into the global economy if a multilateral deal to cut trade red tape was struck. The OECD estimates that if all of the measures currently under negotiation through the WTO's Doha Round were implemented, trade costs could be reduced by up to 15% in developing economies and 10% in advanced economies.

Publication: [Trade facilitation agreement would add billions to global economy](#)



### DID YOU KNOW?

Mexico has one of the highest numbers of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) among WTO Members. It has network of 12 FTAs spanning 44 countries! Australia may be added to that list in the future, with Mexico and Australia both participating in Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations.

Visit the [DFAT trade portal](#) for more on Australian trade, including [FTA updates](#) and [trade statistics](#).