



Media release

The Hon Dr Denis Napthine MP

Premier
Minister for Regional Cities
Minister for Racing

The Hon Louise Asher MP

Minister for Innovation
Minister for Tourism and Major Events
Minister for Employment and Trade

Wednesday 22 October 2014

Victoria launches new International Chamber House

- **Consolidating Victoria as the leading state for global trade and investment**
- **Creating opportunities for Victorian businesses to access new markets**
- **Coalition Government has supported 78 trade missions to 33 countries with more than 3,300 participating Victorian businesses**
- **More than \$4.8 billion in new exports facilitated by the Victorian Coalition Government since 2010**

Premier Denis Napthine and Trade Minister Louise Asher today officially opened Melbourne's new International Chamber House (ICH), the latest Victorian Coalition Government initiative to strengthen the state's engagement with key international markets.

Dr Napthine said the facility, located at 121 Exhibition Street, was the first of its kind in Australia and would act as a hub for a number of bilateral international chambers and business associations, their members and visiting local and offshore business delegates.

"This innovative new centre will further consolidate Victoria's position as the leading Australian state for global trade and investment facilitation," Dr Napthine said.

"We welcome the Australia China Business Council, which is relocating its head office from Sydney to Melbourne to be part of the initiative.

"This is a big win for Melbourne and Victoria, given China is Victoria and Australia's largest trading partner, our largest tourism market and number one source of international students.

"Today's launch coincides with exciting announcements by three Chinese companies which have chosen Melbourne as their Australian headquarters – automotive company, Havel, and hotel companies Hind Group and Fu Wah International Group.

"I am also pleased to announce that the Victorian Branch of the German-Australian Chamber of Commerce and the Victorian branch of the Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry will also relocate to ICH.

"The Australia-Malaysia Business Council is also a key partner and supporter of ICH, as is the Australia Latin America Business Council which has agreed to hold a range of Chamber activities and events.

"We are also in discussion with a number of other prominent chambers and associations which are enthusiastic about joining International Chamber House," Dr Napthine said.

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Based in Melbourne's CBD and managed by Department of State Development, Business and Innovation, ICH will be home to bilateral international chambers and business associations representing markets that have been identified as strategically important to Victoria.

Ms Asher said bilateral international chambers and business associations had played a key role in facilitating introductions and opportunities for the Government's expanded trade missions program.

"ICH is a unique initiative which demonstrates that the Victorian Government has made international engagement one of our top priorities and is connecting more local businesses than ever before with opportunities in global markets," Ms Asher said.

"Just last month I had the pleasure of leading more than 120 local companies and 150 people on our 2014 Victoria Week Trade Mission to China.

"Since December 2010, our Government has supported 78 missions to China, India, South East Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Japan and South Korea, and the Americas.

"In total, these missions have been attended by more than 3,300 businesses and organisations which, as at 1 September 2014, have reported anticipated additional exports in the 24 month period following the mission of more than \$4.8 billion."

Today's launch builds on recent announcements including a \$12 million expansion of Victoria's inbound and outbound trade mission program and a commitment to open Victorian Government Business Offices in Singapore and Latin America.

Victoria has the strongest on-the-ground presence of any Australian state with five new government business offices opened since 2010.

The launch also builds on Victorian Jobs in the 21st Century, which encourages businesses to locate and expand in Victoria through international trade missions. The plan for Victorian jobs in the 21st century will create 200,000 new jobs, 60,000 new apprenticeships and 850,000 new training places.

For more information, visit www.business.vic.gov.au/ich

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(Premier)

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