

USTR NEWS

UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

www.ustr.gov

Washington, D.C. 20508

202-395-3230

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 02, 2008

CONTACT:

Sean Spicer/Gretchen Hamel (202) 395-3230

USTR Schwab and Australian Minister of Trade Hold Annual Free Trade Agreement Review Meeting

Newark – U.S. Trade Representative Susan C. Schwab met today with Australian Minister of Trade Simon Crean to review progress under the United States – Australian Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This was the third meeting of the Joint Committee established under the Agreement to review annually the operation and implementation of the FTA, which went into force in January 2005.

“The FTA has led to a steady increase in trade and investment between the United States and Australia, further bolstering our already strong economic relations,” Ambassador Schwab said. “This meeting was a good opportunity to take stock of progress under the FTA and discuss our joint work on other priority trade issues, including the WTO Doha negotiations.”

During the meeting Ambassador Schwab and Minister Crean noted the positive results of the FTA and discussed specific issues relating to agriculture, intellectual property and services, where the two countries have ongoing discussions. The Ministers also exchanged views on current developments in the Doha Round of WTO talks and how to advance those negotiations, Asia-Pacific economic developments, and issues related to trade and the environment.

Background:

Two-way goods trade between the United States and Australia has increased by 28 percent since the United States – Australia FTA went into effect in 2005, totaling \$28 billion last year. U.S. goods exports to Australia in 2007 were \$19.2 billion, up 8 percent from 2006 and up 35 percent since the FTA went into effect. Top export categories include machinery, vehicles, electrical machinery and optic and medical instruments. U.S. foreign direct investment (FDI) in Australia was \$123 billion in 2006, up 6 percent from 2005 (the most recent available data). Australia FDI in the United States was \$26 billion in the same period, up 15 percent from 2005.

The FTA Joint Committee meets annually to address bilateral trade issues and is designed to ensure the effective implementation and operation of the FTA. Today’s meeting was held in Newark, New Jersey. New Jersey’s exports to Australia have increased 17 percent since the FTA went into force, including increases in a wide array of products ranging from chemicals to fabricated metal products to computers and electronic products.

###