

Federal Labor commits to strengthening anti-dumping provisions

March 2018

On Friday 9 March 2018 Federal Labor Leader Bill Shorten announced that, if elected, Labor would strengthen Australia's framework around anti-dumping.

The policies aim to enhance Australia's capacity to react to developments in the global economy in a timely and forceful manner, ensuring Australian industries receive the required protection from unexpected increases in supply of goods.

The announcement affirmed Labor's commitment to free and open markets where trade is beneficial to Australian industries. The policies are designed to safeguard against those who seek to exploit free and open markets to advantage their industries at the expense of other nations'.

Tripling anti-dumping penalties

A Shorten Labor Government's will triple penalties for companies attempting to circumvent anti-dumping laws through misclassification of goods. This would send a strong signal to those considering engaging in misconduct of this nature.

Australia has imposed duties of 24 per cent on dumped steel while the United States has imposed duties of 256 per cent. These strengthened penalties would bring Australian into step with comparable economies.

Revenue from increased penalties will be invested into further strengthening Australia's anti-dumping framework.

Increased funding to the Anti-Dumping Commission

Labor committed to increasing funding to the Commission by \$3.5 million a year, allowing for more proactive investigation.

The increased funding is expected to equate to 30 new staff to the Commission, who would be used to establish a team focused on the steel and aluminium industry, a key target for importers.

Additional powers to the Anti-Dumping Commission

A future Labor government will streamline the framework around anti-dumping by ensuring all trade remedy decision-making is carried out by the Commission.

Currently, responsibility for trade remedies is shared between the Anti-Dumping Commission, which deals with dumping and countervailing measures, and the Productivity Commission, which deals with applying actions in response to sudden increase in imports.

The Senate Economics References Committee Inquiry into Australia's Steel Industry heard evidence that the EU, US, Canada, Korea, China and South Africa have a single body to deal with all trade remedies. Brining these two functions into the purview of the Commission will bring Australia in line with best-practice global anti-dumping frameworks.

Further information

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