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SENATOR THE HON SIMON BIRMINGHAM

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate

Senator for South Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

22 October 2019

Celebrating the shipping container in Australia's trade success

Fifty years ago, the first purpose-built container ship to visit Australia, the *Encounter Bay*, called into Fremantle and Melbourne. In the decades since, container shipping has revolutionised Australia's trade with the world.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Simon Birmingham today welcomed the launch of the short film '*World in a Box*' commemorating the anniversary in Australia's trade history.

"By making transport easier, the shipping container has helped Australian exporters overcome the tyranny of distance and get their goods into the hands of consumers across the globe," said Minister Birmingham.

"Australia's trade in goods is a staggering 84 times larger today than it was in 1969, and more than \$1.2 billion worth of trade now passes through Australian ports each day.

"This film serves as an important reminder of the impact the shipping container has had not just on the transport industry, but our entire economy.

"One in five Australian jobs are now trade related and Australian business that export, on average, hire 23 per cent more staff and pay 11 per cent higher wages.

“Before the container, maritime transport costs accounted for between 5 and 20 per cent of the price of finished goods. Today it is only around 1.5 per cent.

“From this considerable change in the trade landscape consumers have reaped the benefits by being given access to a wider variety of goods at lower prices.

“I am pleased that this film will raise awareness about the importance and benefits of trade and what the technology of containerization has brought all Australians.”

Members of the public can see the film at <http://rounding-up.com/world-in-a-box/>

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Authorised by Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, South Australia.