



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Industry,  
Science and Resources**

**Ministerial Submission**

MS25-001726

**FOR ACTION – Opportunity to announce Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand new agreement**

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**TO:** Minister for Industry and Innovation; Minister for Science

**CC:** Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and the Digital Economy

**TIMING**

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**Urgent:** 6 February 2026; NZ Minister Simpson has indicated wanting to announce on 9 February 2026.

**Recommendations**

- That you **agree** to a media release announcing the signing of a new trans-Tasman standards agreement between Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand to strengthen the Single Economic Market.

**Agreed / Not agreed**

Signature	Date: / /2026
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## KEY POINTS

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- The department recommends that you issue a media release announcing the signing of a new Standards Development and Distribution Agreement between Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand.
  - Australian industry stakeholders have advocated for the new Agreement, which will increase trans-Tasman standards alignment. A media release will signal your understanding of and support for this development.
  - The department's Communications branch is working with your office on the communication approach and products.
- New Zealand Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, the Hon Scott Simpson, has indicated he will issue a media release announcing the new Agreement on 9 February 2026 (see [Attachment A](#)).
- The new Agreement reinvigorates arrangements for developing joint Australia/New Zealand standards. The new Agreement took effect on 1 January 2026.
  - s33(a)(iii)
  - s33(a)(iii)
  - Industry stakeholders from both Australia and New Zealand identified de-jointing of standards as a point of strain for the Single Economic Market and requested that the Australian and New Zealand Governments work together to address the issue.
- The new Agreement represents a shift toward:
  - improving governance for joint standards development,
  - creating clearer pathways for Australian and New Zealand experts to contribute to standards development, and
  - realising efficiency gains for industry and regulators.
- The Agreement updates long-standing trans-Tasman arrangements and modernises governance for managing more than 2,000 existing joint standards.
- Australian industry will benefit from the new Agreement through strengthened alignment with international standards, resulted in improving trans-Tasman market access and trade opportunities.

- Joint standards support several critical sectors for both Australia and New Zealand including building and construction, energy and gas, healthcare and community services, occupational and consumer safety, business and trade, hospitality, logistics, manufacturing, environment and sustainability, and digital technologies.
- The Agreement reinforces the role of standards as a key enabler of the Australia–New Zealand Single Economic Market, including under Closer Economic Relations and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

## DATA REFERENCED

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- Draft Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand Joint Statement (see [Attachment B](#)).

## CONSULTATION

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- Standards Australia.
- New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

### Clearance Officer

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Clearance Date: 03/02/2026

### Contact Officer

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## ATTACHMENTS

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s33(b), s 47C

B: DRAFT\_Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand Joint Statement

s33(b), s 47C

s33(b), s 47C



## Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand Joint Statement

XX February 2026

### New Trans-Tasman Agreement to strengthen Single Economic Market

Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand have signed a new **Standards Development and Distribution Agreement and Standard Operating Procedures**, marking a major step forward in modernising and streamlining the development and maintenance of joint trans-Tasman standards, and the harmonised adoption of international standards together.

This renewed agreement strengthens one of the region's longest-standing partnerships and reinforces our shared ambition for a seamless Single Economic Market. It enhances the trans-Tasman standards system through:

- Contemporary governance arrangements that reflect modern expectations and best practice.
- Clearer pathways for developing and maintaining joint trans-Tasman standards and adopting international standards.
- A more streamlined approach that reduces duplication and improves efficiency for industry, regulators and stakeholders.
- Updated commercial arrangements that support a sustainable and collaborative operating model between two national standards bodies.

Together, these improvements create a more coordinated, efficient, and future-focused standards system that supports innovation, competitiveness, and economic growth and integration across Australia and New Zealand.

Importantly, the new agreement will enable broader industry participation and strengthen alignment with international standards trusted by businesses and consumers alike.

By modernising how our two National Standards Bodies develop, maintain and provide access to joint standards, we are future-proofing a relationship underpinning more than 2,000 existing joint standards supporting significant trans-Tasman economic activity.

The renewed partnership will deepen cooperation and alignment across shared priorities, including emerging technologies, energy transition, climate resilience, digital technology including AI and biometrics, supply chain strength, and the harmonisation of standards that support trade, safety, consumer protection and market competition. It reinforces the essential role of standards as an enabler of the NZ–Australia Single Economic Market, as well as longstanding arrangements like the Closer Economic Relations agreement and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement.

Our shared vision is a modern trans-Tasman standards system that keeps pace with change, enhances productivity, and strengthens the capacity of both nations to participate in global markets. By harmonising how standards are developed and adopted, we are supporting industry growth, regulatory coherence, and safer, more efficient outcomes for businesses and communities on both sides of the Tasman.

Together, Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand are committed to delivering on this vision and to ensuring this partnership remains a strong and stable pillar of economic prosperity, innovation, and co-operation across the Tasman.

**Standards Australia Chief Executive Officer, Rod Balding, said the agreement provides tangible benefits across both economies.**

“This agreement delivers a more modern, efficient and predictable standards system across the Tasman for industry and the community. It supports safer products, stronger productivity and smoother pathways for businesses operating in both countries. Most importantly, it reflects a shared ambition to ensure our standards keep pace with new technologies and changing market needs.”

**New Zealand Standards Executive, Sanjai Raj, said the strengthened partnership reflects a long-standing commitment to joint outcomes.**

“New Zealand and Australia have a long history of working together on standards that deliver practical benefits for people, communities and our shared economy. This agreement strengthens that partnership and creates a more streamlined way of developing joint Trans-Tasman and adopting international standards in a harmonised way. It also gives our organisations greater ability to be strong economic enablers respond to emerging national and regional priorities, and support industry to become more connected to international markets and trade opportunities.”

The new Agreement took effect from 1 January 2026.

## FAQs

### **What are joint trans-Tasman standards and how are they developed?**

Joint standards are developed or jointly adopted through committees comprising Australian and New Zealand subject matter experts from industry, government, academia, consumer and community sectors. These representative committees work together to reach consensus on rules, specifications, guidance, or requirements that support safety, quality, business productivity, consumer protection and interoperability of products and services across both economies. Joint standards carry recognition in both Australian and New Zealand markets, and regionally across the Pacific Islands.

### **How long have Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand been working together on joint standards?**

The organisations have collaborated for around 40 years. There are now more than 2,000 joint Trans-Tasman standards, many of which support regulatory systems in both countries, trade agreements, market access, and essential consumer protections.

### **What are the benefits of joint standards?**

Joint standards help strengthen market access, reduce unnecessary differences between the two economies, improve regulatory consistency, set consistent quality requirements and lower compliance costs for business. They support workforce mobility, product safety, and quality assurance across sectors and priorities including building and construction, transport, manufacturing, health, agriculture, renewable energies, climate action and digital technologies.

By working together, both countries benefit from combined technical expertise and can more easily align with international standards that support innovation and global trade. Businesses in Australia and New Zealand can more easily trade and sell their goods and services in each other's markets, and regionally, because they meet the same and recognised standards.

In summary joint trans-Tasman standards

- Reduce barriers to trade
- Lower Compliance costs
- Improve Safety and Quality Outcomes
- Create Stronger regional and global influence
- Support innovation and emerging technologies
- Support economic efficiency and productivity gains
- Provide stronger consumer protection
- Create consistency for exporters, regulators and enforcement bodies
- Supports Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement and Closer Economic Relations trade agreement.

### **Which sectors do joint standards cover?**

More than 2,000 AS/NZS joint standards support areas including:

Building and construction, energy and gas, healthcare and community services, occupational and consumer safety, business and trade, hospitality, logistics, manufacturing, environment and sustainability, and digital technologies.

### **What are the shared priorities for Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand?**

Current shared priorities include supporting the safe adoption of emerging technologies such as AI and quantum computing, enabling the energy transition, promoting the adoption of international

standards, strengthening trans-Tasman supply chain resilience, building standardisation and quality infrastructure capability across the Pacific Islands, and supporting productivity, competitiveness, and market access for industry.

**Will standards always remain aligned?**

The new agreement ensures industry affordability is no longer a barrier to joint standards work, making it easier to undertake joint standards development, maintenance and adoption. This has been a particular challenge in the New Zealand market over the number of years under its full user-pays standards operating model. Each country, however, retains the ability to decide whether a standard should be developed jointly or separately. Where regulatory or market needs diverge, national (domestic) standards remain a business-as-usual option

**Contacts for communications enquiries****Standards Australia**

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**Standards New Zealand**

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