



## Department for International Trade

The Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP  
Secretary of State for International Trade  
Department for International Trade  
Old Admiralty Building  
London  
SW1A 2DY

Angus Brendan MacNeil MP  
Chair, International Trade Committee,  
House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA

22 April 2022

Dear Angus,

Thank you for your reply to my letter of 13 April.

I would like to set out that the Government has gone above and beyond the requirements for Parliamentary scrutiny:

- The Government published the text of the agreement in December 2021 - as soon as we signed the UK-Australian Free Trade Agreement. Publication of the text immediately after signature means that the Committee and Parliament have had access to the text to date for over four months, in excess of our previous commitment to delay triggering CRaG for “at least three months.”
- My Department published the TAC advice on the UK-Australia FTA last week on the gov.uk website and laid it before the House as a Command Paper - two weeks after we received it. We also shared it with you, and several other Select Committees, in confidence several days earlier.
- I also believe that my Department has gone further than our requirements in ensuring appropriate parliamentary scrutiny. In addition to the statutory requirements for parliamentary scrutiny – publication of the TAC and section 42 reports – the Government also publishes: a public consultation, a public bundle (including objectives and scoping assessment ahead of launch of negotiations), round reports at end of each substantive round of talks, as well as the treaty text and holding briefings with relevant officials.

The only outstanding publication is the Government’s response to the TAC report – the section 42 report, which my Department is currently working on. We believe that there will be ample time to review the final publication and to trigger CRaG, given the access to other documents prior to this, and I will endeavour that the committee has the longest period possible to review the Government’s response to the TAC report ahead of triggering CRaG. I would also highlight the balance that the Government is seeking: to ensure appropriate public and parliamentary scrutiny while also ensuring prompt ratification of the FTA so that businesses can benefit from it.

A prolonged period of parliamentary scrutiny may impact on the ratification process, thereby delaying entry into force of the agreement – and the associated benefits for businesses, producers and consumers.

As I have set out previously, CRaG is the statutory framework for scrutiny of treaties, and s42 is a statutory step prior to CRaG to ensure that parliamentarians have comprehensive information to inform the 21-day sitting day scrutiny period.

Although I cannot commit to a fixed period of time between s42 publication and CRaG, I will, however, endeavour to ensure that you receive the s42 report prior to publication in order that you can fully consider it.

I look forward to seeing the Committee next Wednesday.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anne-Marie Trevelyan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**THE RT HON ANNE-MARIE TREVELYAN MP**  
**Secretary of State for International Trade**  
**& President of the Board of Trade**