The Foreign Policy White Paper describes a tough, exciting and competitive landscape. It also describes five tasks set by the Australian Government for Australia’s future:

• secure our interests in our region
• take up opportunities in the global economy
• keep Australians safe, secure and free
• strengthen the international rules that make it all work
• help our near neighbours and partners.

To complement the White Paper, we’ve set out some numbers to show how Australia’s international network supports our engagement with the world.
The story of our overseas network starts with people...

Right now, 2,363 Australians from 23 Australian Government departments and agencies are working in our 117 embassies, high commissions, consulates and trade offices overseas (posts, for short). This is the core of our overseas network.

There are also 4,385 locally employed people drawn from over 100 different nationalities who help us deliver the services and advice needed overseas.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has 2,643 staff in Canberra, 317 staff in our state and territory capitals and 897 Australian staff overseas. Over half (55.1%) of DFAT’s overseas staff are based in our neighbourhood: Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Pacific.

DFAT’s Australian-based staff support 108 foreign diplomatic missions in Canberra and 369 consulates and honorary consulates around Australia that represent 164 countries.

Our people speak about 40 languages. This means we can better understand and communicate with our host countries, and do the best possible job of representing Australia’s interests overseas.
We help secure economic opportunity...

Our economic growth, prosperity and standard of living depend on our ability to sell our goods and services around the world.

Australian companies are impressive on the global stage—international trade is worth 40% of our gross domestic product. 1 IN 5 Australian jobs are related to trade, and the average Australian household is better off by $8,448 a year after three decades of trade liberalisation.

For 70 years, Australia’s trade negotiators have been working to ensure rules around international trade work for Australia. These rules underwrite almost $2 BILLION of Australia’s trade each day, or over $687 BILLION a year. That means more certainty, better access to global markets and better opportunities for Australian businesses operating abroad.

More than 3,000 Australian business people have attended one of our free trade agreement roadshows to learn about export opportunities. We’ve held over 80 roadshows since 2015.

Our international network also encourages investment in Australia. Around $3 TRILLION in total foreign investment was secured in Australia at the end of 2016. It helps tourism attract 7.9 MILLION visitors a year, who spend $40.6 BILLION and employ 580,000 Australians. The Government also has agricultural specialists in 16 markets, working to expand and maintain access for our farmers under other countries’ technical and biosecurity arrangements.

In 2016, Australia was the THIRD-LARGEST provider of education to international students. More than 550,000 students from over 180 countries studied here. They spent $22.4 BILLION and employed over 130,000 Australians. This creates lively, multicultural learning experiences, but also boosts our domestic education market for everyone’s benefit.

New technology and innovation will help create the jobs of the future. The Government supports more than 4,000 science, research and innovation projects with over 100 countries through its competitive funding schemes.

Austrade staff in more than 49 global markets are on the hunt for opportunities for Australian businesses. In the last financial year, Australia’s Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (Efic) provided $396 MILLION in financial assistance to Australian exporters, which supported 170 export contracts worth over $1 BILLION.
We help keep Australia and Australians safe...

Security is not something any nation can guarantee in isolation, and we work closely with our neighbours and friends in the region and further afield.

The Department of Defence is committed to ensuring we can defend our nation, as well as deepening and extending international defence relationships. We deploy defence personnel overseas—2,350 of them in 9 separate active operations at present, and another 900 stationed in 47 countries representing our interests and working closely with our partners.

About 70% of serious and organised crime in Australia has an international connection. The Australian Federal Police has representatives in 33 countries working in partnership with foreign law enforcement agencies.

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection supervised 43 MILLION crossings at Australia’s international borders in 2016-17. During the same period, ships made 36,654 visits to Australian ports, over 58 MILLION international mail items were inspected, and our detector dogs made 1,974 detections.

In 2016-17, the Department of Health monitored 51 international public health events and assessed the level of threat posed to Australians. It also reported 71 public health incidents that occurred in Australia to other countries.

Safety and prosperity go hand in hand, so we work with our neighbours to make our region more prosperous and secure.

In 2017-18, we will provide $3.9 BILLION in overseas development assistance and design and deliver programs to reduce poverty and encourage economic growth. In 2015-16, 1,106,186 girls and boys enrolled in school and 2,816,720 children were vaccinated because of Australian aid.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research invests in more than 250 projects every year, building capacity and improving the lives of people in 36 countries.

Our aid program helped over 200,000 people after Cyclone Winston in 2016. The Government is also supporting 57 high-performing non-government organisations like World Vision Australia and the Australian Red Cross to the tune of $129 MILLION for some 450 projects in over 50 countries this year alone.
We help Australians get out there...

More than 56% of Australians have a passport—that’s around 14 MILLION passports. In 2016–17, we issued 2,070,038 Australian passports and 4,562 were reported lost or stolen overseas.

Australians generally use common sense when they travel. On average, 1,000 people a day register as new users with Smartraveller and the Smartraveller website received more than 19 MILLION page views in 2016–17.

Sometimes things go wrong and DFAT is called on to help Australians in trouble. In 2016–17, 12,454 people were provided consular assistance in 187 locations overseas. Or they called home – each year, DFAT’s Consular Emergency Centre answers around 66,000 calls from Australia and overseas.

Australia’s first Government-sponsored overseas volunteer worked in Jakarta in 1951. Since then, over 13,000 Australians, young and old, have been volunteers in 70 developing countries working with around 3,000 partner organisations. Last year, the Government supported over 1,200 volunteers in 25 countries in around 750 organisations, all of them helping to advance Australia’s interests overseas and providing crucial support to our neighbours.

Students are great pathfinders and Australian students study all around the world. By 2018 we will have supported more than 30,000 young Australians to study and connect with people in 40 destinations across our region through New Colombo Plan scholarships and grants.
We share our culture, our values and our multicultural way of life with the world...

Australians are diverse: 1 IN 4 were born overseas and 1 IN 2 have a parent born overseas. In 2016–17, the Australian Government conferred Australian citizenship on 137,750 people from at least 200 different countries.

Our diplomatic missions are engaging daily with the world. In 2015–16, they collectively hosted 838 cultural diplomacy events, celebrating Australian sport, fashion, film, music, food, wine and art.

They also shared celebrations with our neighbours across faith and culture, attending more than 100 different religious or cultural festivals and holidays every year.

Our embassies, high commissions and consulates are also working in the digital space. Australian Government mission websites overseas clocked 10,256,205 users during 2016–17. These users made 14,931,236 visits to our sites, generating 33,377,100 page views.

On social media, we run more than 230 accounts overseas and in Australia, from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to the Chinese sites Weibo and WeChat.
As we do our job we help, work with and draw inspiration from Australians from all walks of life. Maybe you’re a grandparent or a volunteer working in the Pacific. Or an exporter of ice cream, wine or coal. You may be a young Australian studying overseas. Or you might enjoy saving money on white goods from Korea, thanks to our free trade agreement. Whatever your story, you’re an important part of Australia’s foreign policy.
Australia is a top 20 country

Australia is the second-wealthiest nation in terms of wealth per adult after Switzerland.

Australia is the world’s largest exporter of coal, iron ore, beef and wool.

Australia is the world’s third-largest provider of education to international students.

Australia is ranked first on the Global Creativity Index.

Australia is ranked first for wellbeing with six of our states in the top 10 OECD regions.