

14 January 2000



Review of Australia's General Tariff Arrangements
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Sir/Madam

I refer to the Review of Australia's General Tariff Arrangements and in particular I would draw your attention to tariffs applying to stainless steel flat products.

Australia is a significant world producer of nickel and WMC is the third-largest nickel producer in Australia, much of which is exported for the manufacture of stainless.

There is no local manufacture of stainless steel products and, as such, we are concerned that the current 3% tariff impost on imported stainless steel intermediate products, for Australia fabricators, represents essentially a tax on stainless steel (and nickel) consumption.

Removal of the tariff impost on stainless steel flat products will result in more competitively priced stainless steel products. Such an increase in demand for stainless steel will ultimately be of benefit for nickel producing countries such as Australia.

I urge that the Productivity Commission in its review of General Tariff Arrangements recommend to the Treasurer the removal of import tariffs for stainless steel flat products.

Yours faithfully

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