



NEW YEAR'S REPORT – 2023

THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND MIXED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Introduction

2022 was a successful year for your Chamber as we ramped up activity levels.

This report provides a summary of our activities in 2022, a preview of what is planned for 2023, and some other news.

2022 Highlights

With the removal of the barriers created by Covid and opportunities created by our new legal status, the level of our activity increased.

Changes to the business environment created some challenges and will continue to do so going forward. In particular, with increased working from home, it seems to be more challenging to attract people to in-person networking events.

In 2022 we organised or participated in the following events:

2 February Business Mixer

We had an enjoyable business mixer together with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic in the friendly atmosphere of the Yalta Craft Bistro.

23 April ANZAC Day Ceremony

After a break of two years, we were able to resume our traditional organisation of the ANZAC Day Ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves in Prague in conjunction with the Australian Consulate. The Ceremony was attended by dignitaries including Julia Reynolds from the New Zealand Embassy and General Ing.

Petr Lanči, Deputy Commander of the ACR Air Force and Ing. Daniel Blažkovec, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic.

12 May Meeting with Inter-Parliamentary Group of Friends of the Czech Republic - Australia, New Zealand

James Turnbull met with JUDr. Michael Kohajda, MP, Chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Group of Friends of the Czech Republic - Australia, New Zealand.

Since that meeting Dr Kohajda has been supportive of and be involved in a number of ABIE activities.

27 May Aussie and Kiwi B2B Wine Day in Prague

This was the very successful first iteration of what will now be an annual event. It was organised by ABIE with the support of Austrade and NZTE and gave 19 New Zealand and 24 Australian wineries the opportunity to present their wine to the Czech wine market. Attendance and the overall quality of the entire event was excellent, and this was a highlight of 2022. The event will be repeated in March 2023.

3 June Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee

We participated in this British Chamber of Commerce organised event celebrating the Platinum Jubilee. A number of our members attended at the BCC Members' price.

6 June Australian FTA Roundtable

We participated in this private event which was organised by Austrade and the Australian Embassy. The largest Australian businesses and investors in the Czech Republic were represented. We also met privately with Alison Burrows, the chief negotiator for the Australia – EU free trade agreement (FTA) and communicated the views and opinions of our membership.

14 Sept Parliamentarian Networking Lunch

We enjoyed a pleasant informal lunch with JUDr Kohajda and parliamentary colleagues as well as diplomatic representatives from Australia and New Zealand. This was a well-attended and enjoyable event helped along as always by some excellent Australian and New Zealand wine.

11 Oct ESG in Practice

We organised a forum focusing on what ESG has meant for business and to help prepare our members for coming obligations in this area. We were delighted to obtain the participation of three very high profile Australian and Czech business leaders and so we were very disappointed to be forced to cancel the event due to lack of registrations.

26 Nov **CANZA Charity Ball**

We participated as a partner in this successful event, which was attended by a number of members and which raised funds for SKP HOPO, a shelter providing 84 beds, temporary accommodation for those in need, support and services..

15 Dec **Free Trade Agreement between Europe and Australia**

We participated in this high-profile ABIE European online event. The speakers were Christophe Kiener – Head of Unit for South and Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand, European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade, and Nils Weller – Trade Relations with Australia and New Zealand, European Commission

They provided an overview of the current state of negotiations between the EU and Australia and answered questions from attendees

2023 Plans

For 2023 we are already planning:

- A repeat of the business mixer with the Canadian Chamber (31 January)
- An HR themed networking event
- An event with the new New Zealand ambassador
- The already confirmed B2B wine festival (23 March)
- plus much more . . .

As our plans firm up, we will communicate more details.

Website Update

During the second half of 2022 we updated and enhanced our web presence. We also switched to a new domain in order to avoid confusion that our previous domain was sometimes causing.

The new domain and website is www.anzcham.cz

Please do feel free to visit the site and also to let us have any comments or suggestions as the new site remains very much a ‘work in progress’.

Board Update

Existing board members:

- James Turnbull
- Richard York
- James Fitzgerald, and
- Daniel Bican

were joined this year by Sarah Marquet in the role of Chamber Secretary. We welcome Sarah and thank her for her significant and positive contribution.

There is always space for new people to get involved with our Chamber. The time commitment is not significant, and we do need to gradually begin planning for succession as the term of existing board members is limited to a maximum of five years.

If you are interested in getting more involved, please let us know.

Financials / Membership

Preparation of accounts for the Chamber is underway, and these will be circulated with the invitation to the AGM in spring.

At this stage we can confirm that the Chamber is in a sound financial position.

We have 12 corporate members at present, which is sufficient to give us the necessary critical mass, but of course we would welcome more members. The more participation we have, the greater resources we are able to allocate to our activities. If you are aware of any companies who are not currently members and who should be, please do encourage them to join us.

Conclusion

We would like to thank you, our members, for your support over 2022 and look forward to continuing to work with you in 2023.