The Australia–New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement, better known as CER, was New Zealand’s first comprehensive bilateral trade agreement, and one of the first such agreements in the world.

CER came into force on 1 January 1983, but the agreement was not formally signed until 28 March, by New Zealand’s High Commissioner in Canberra, Laurie Francis, and Australia’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Lionel Bowen. CER built upon the New Zealand Australia Free Trade Agreement that had been implemented in 1966.

By 1990, there was free trade in goods and nearly all services between the two countries. In recent years they have moved towards even closer cooperation in policies, laws and regulatory regimes. CER became a model for other bilateral trade relationships. It was described by the World Trade Organization as ‘the world’s most comprehensive, effective and mutually compatible free trade agreement’.


Read more on NZHistory
1983 - key events – The 1980s

External links
Closer Economic Relations (Wikipedia)
Full text of the ANZCERTA
Australia and New Zealand (Te Ara)
UnCERTainty (Te Ara)
Difficult times (Te Ara)

How to cite this page

Share this event