

## **DIGITAL ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE COMMENCES ACCESSION WORKING GROUP FOR CHINA**

1 The Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) Joint Committee has agreed to formally commence the accession process for China, following China's application to join DEPA on 1 November 2021. To do so, the Joint Committee has established an Accession Working Group (AWG) which will be chaired by Chile. The AWG will examine China's accession request, conduct discussions on its ability to comply to the standards and commitments of DEPA, and submit a report to the Joint Committee on the proposed terms and conditions of China's accession.

2 Minister for Trade and Industry, Gan Kim Yong said, "Singapore welcomes China's application to join DEPA and is happy to move forward with the AWG. DEPA aims to create a common framework for rules and standards while fostering greater cooperation in the digital economy."

3 The AWG comprising government representatives from each DEPA Party will discuss the accession of the aspirant economy. The aspirant economy will be required to demonstrate to the AWG its ability to meet the DEPA obligations, including any additional changes to its domestic laws and regulations that will be required.

4 Current DEPA members consist of Chile, New Zealand and Singapore. AWG discussions for the Republic of Korea are currently ongoing and are chaired by Singapore.

**18 August 2022**

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