

## **INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**

*Statement by Minister for Innovation and ICT*

**MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Innovation and ICT)** [2.48 pm]: Western Australia is full of smart people with smart ideas who need a little bit of support to help turn their innovations into great Western Australian businesses, employing Western Australian people. On 6 November, I announced the 2019 Innovator of the Year Award winner. This award was created by the Carpenter Labor government to support Western Australians with bright ideas and help them turn those ideas into businesses that grow, flourish and create Western Australian jobs. This year's overall winner was a Western Australian company that removes dangerous chemicals from the mining process. Bentley-based Mining and Process Solutions won the overall award for a non-toxic, biodegradable and re-usable liquid that can be used to extract certain metals, including gold, silver, copper and nickel, from ore. Partnering with Curtin University, MPS is continuing the state's outstanding history in the development of technologies that support an efficient, safe and environmentally sustainable mining industry with global potential.

These awards show how Labor governments grow and stimulate economies. The award winners receive cash prizes to stimulate and grow their business, and media and commercialisation training throughout the year. This award has consistently uncovered local innovations that go on to achieve success, making a real difference to industry, creating and supporting local jobs, and putting Western Australia on the map for innovation.

A past winner of the Innovator of the Year Award was Fastbrick Robotics, now called FBR. FBR is employing highly skilled science, technology, engineering and mathematics professionals, and the company has grown from 11 to 112 employees in just three years. That is 100 new Western Australian jobs from one small business that is being supported by this government. The 2018 overall winner, uDrew, has moved into its first office. It has also been invited to Silicon Valley, and has been recommended to the European Union by international analytics company IDC as part of its report into digitising Europe's building and consent processes by 2030. The team has grown from one in 2018 to now employing nine full-time staff and a number of additional contractors and interns, and four more full-time staff are expected to start work in a couple of months. To keep up with demand, uDrew forecasts that a total of 20 full-time staff will be required by early next year.

These are but a few examples of how Innovator of the Year Award winners go on to much bigger and better things and create Western Australian jobs. The McGowan government will continue to support our inspiring Western Australian small businesses, which, through innovation and courage, are creating the Western Australian jobs of today and the future.