

**DRAFT “DIGITAL INCLUSION IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA:
A BLUEPRINT FOR A DIGITALLY-INCLUSIVE STATE”**

Statement by Minister for Innovation and ICT

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Innovation and ICT) [9.14 am]: There is little doubt that the way we work and live has changed over the course of this year, yet for many in our community the transition to accessing digital technology and online services is anything but seamless. Digital inclusion aims to give people of all ages, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, abilities, income levels and locations the skills and tools needed to access and engage with digital technology and online services. This is why I have released the draft “Digital Inclusion in Western Australia: A Blueprint for a Digitally-Inclusive State” to gather feedback on how to make Western Australia more digitally inclusive.

Every day across the globe people spend on average six hours a day online, yet 11.6 per cent of Western Australian households do not have access to the internet. Further, 26 per cent of the state’s lowest income earners do not access the internet. Western Australians will now have the opportunity to share their experiences of using digital technology and provide valuable feedback on the draft blueprint. The draft blueprint identifies four key priority areas for digital inclusion focusing on digital connectivity, affordability, digital skills and the design of online government services. Feedback will inform the “Digital Inclusion in Western Australia: A Blueprint for a Digitally-Inclusive State”, which will guide the delivery of digital inclusion initiatives in Western Australia.

The recent pandemic has further highlighted the challenges for those in our community who do not have ready access to these technologies and the difficulty in accessing services when it can no longer be done face to face. The McGowan government is committed to empowering all members of the Western Australian community to confidently and safely enjoy the benefits of digital technologies in their everyday lives and more readily access the services they need. Digital and printable copies of targeted surveys, catering to general members of the public and organisations providing services to digitally disadvantaged clients, as well as the draft blueprint itself, are available at wa.gov.au or by calling 6552 5235.