

CYBER SECURITY GROWTH CENTRE — JOONDALUP NODE

197. Ms E. HAMILTON to the Minister for Innovation and ICT:

I refer to today's announcement that a Western Australian node of the national Cyber Security Growth Centre will be established at the McGowan Labor government's Joondalup innovation hub. Can the minister outline to the house what this means for WA's cybersecurity sector, and how will this deliver on the McGowan Labor government's commitment to supporting and creating high-tech innovation jobs?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

I thank the member for the question, and her interest in job creation in Joondalup—being one of the very special people from Joondalup.

The number one priority of this government is job creation. We came into office committing to diversify the Western Australian economy. We want to be known for an economy that is based as much on high-tech jobs as any other sector. Sadly, one of the growing areas of employment in this state is actually cybersecurity. It is a growth industry across Australia and around the world. A lot of people do not know that at Edith Cowan University we have one of world's leading research units for cybersecurity. It is known around the world for the work it does on cybersecurity. We have done a number of things to capitalise on the opportunity of job creation in the cybersecurity industry. We established the Joondalup innovation hub, based at ECU, which focuses on cybersecurity. We worked with ECU and the City of Joondalup to put that innovation hub in place.

The innovation hub is already bearing fruit, with two significant announcements. First of all, a cybersecurity cooperative research centre—CRC—will be headquartered at the Joondalup innovation hub. That will give that institution a share of up to \$50 million worth of research projects funded through the federal government. The second announcement was announced today—that is, the location of the Western Australian node of the national Cyber Security Growth Centre at Joondalup at the innovation hub. Again, these growth centres are federally funded, industry-led initiatives around a number of industries the federal government has identified as being potential job creators in Australia. The fact that the node will be at the innovation hub at ECU is no coincidence. It is because of the work we have been doing to elevate the profile of the cybersecurity industry around that hub. The node will give start-ups and small-to-medium enterprises the opportunity to have business development training through that node to improve their prospects of growing a business around cybersecurity. Already, nationally, this financial year \$3 million in projects has been awarded to companies who wanted to build a business in and around cybersecurity. By having a node here in Western Australia, we will enable Western Australian companies to have easy access to that fund.

It is a good news story for Western Australia. Although the whole issue of cybersecurity is challenging, with every challenge there is an opportunity. We want to make sure that the industry expertise we have at ECU around cybersecurity is not just an academic resource here in Western Australia, but that it actually becomes the basis for a growing industry and creating jobs here in Western Australia.