

CURTIN 5G LAB

Statement by Minister for Innovation and ICT

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Innovation and ICT) [12.16 pm]: In my capacity as Minister for Innovation and ICT, I had the opportunity recently to officially open the Curtin 5G lab, powered by Optus. It was an absolute pleasure to see the partnership between Curtin University and Optus come to fruition, as they come together to leverage Curtin University research and teaching capabilities with the tech infrastructure provided by Optus. The opening of the 5G lab is but a small taste of the great innovative work happening here in Western Australia. Every day, new technology is being created, giving us a glimpse into the jobs of tomorrow that will be created today. The Curtin–Optus alliance showcases the advancement in technology in our state, but also serves to encourage local entrepreneurship and prepare Curtin students for the digital economy. Accomplishments like this will highlight how a digital economy can broadly enhance our daily lives and enable government and industry to better respond to emerging challenges.

We have seen firsthand the critical role a digital economy has played in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and helping our communities remain connected while physical distancing restrictions have been in place. The McGowan government understands the critical role innovation and ICT play in Western Australia and we see the transformative possibilities that 5G technology will bring to government and industry. 5G technology will also lead to the creation of new industries and the development of applications that we are only just starting to grasp. Augmented reality, artificial intelligence and hyper-connected spaces are only a few of the future-shaping opportunities 5G presents.

The opening of the Optus and Curtin 5G lab is a major step in cementing WA as a leader in innovative technology with life-changing impacts. 5G can transform industries across the country, including mining, oil, gas, agriculture and health, by powering new technologies and jobs for the future. I look forward to seeing the great advances emerging from the Curtin–Optus alliance and the innovative work produced for the benefit of our entire state.