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**17 November 2020**

**AIIA welcomes Ministerial appointments that shine a light on Queensland's Digital Economy and Innovation**

Australia's peak body for the technology industry, the Australian Information Industry Association ([AIIA](#)) welcomes the Palaszczuk Government's reinstatement of a Minister for Digital Economy and an appointment of a Minister for Innovation.

In October, the AIIA released its pre-election policy statement, making 21 recommendations and identifying key areas of focus for an incoming Queensland Government with Ministerial appointments key to driving the state from its current position to a leader when it comes to the digitisation of government services.

The AIIA CEO Ron Gauci said: "With these appointments and a renewed focus on innovation and the ICT industry, Queensland can now move towards building a State budget that takes its economy forward and boosts skills, innovation and jobs with digital technology at the centre."

Mark Nicholls, AIIA Queensland Council Chair and National Deputy Chair, said: "We welcome the opportunity to meet with both Minister Enoch and Minister Hinchliffe to support ICT investments that deliver for the state and ensure the State doesn't fall further behind. The AIIA encourages the Queensland Government to increase its investment in building digital capability to be more in line with what is happening elsewhere around the country."

"We also look forward to continuing our work with the Minister for Employment, Small Business, Training and Skills Development and welcome Minister Farmer to the role," Mr Nicholls said.

"The COVID pandemic has demonstrated that digital technologies are core to effective government, citizen engagement and productivity. Innovation technology is driving investments across Australia in areas such as health, mining, defence and education," Mr Gauci continued.

The AIIA recommended areas of policy priorities and investment focus on government digitisation, SME and procurement reforms, attracting and building tech ecosystems, investing in the regions and boosting digital skills.

"The fact that regions in Queensland are coming last on digital inclusion index should concern all Queenslanders however, the commitment of appointing two Ministerial portfolios will help drive a whole-of-government approach to innovation, technology, cyber strategy and execution - working closely with industry," Mr Gauci explained.

**Summary of recommendations:** (for full QLD pre-election statement please go to [AIIA's Queensland Pre-Election Policy Statement](#))

1. That the Queensland Government adopt a target of 50% or less of its IT expenditure being spent on running existing operations by 2024.
2. That the Government publish its whole-of-government and departmental BAU ICT spend, and its mix of spend between BAU and renewal/reinvestment (and supporting metrics) on an annual basis.

The AIIA calls on an incoming Queensland Government to boost the local ICT industry and realise its 30% SME target by 2022 by:

3. Creating a whole-of-government digital SME marketplace where all contracts under \$500,000 must be procured and information on the marketplace performance is published twice a year.

4. Publishing, on a quarterly basis, how many direct-sourced contracts have been procured up to the current \$500,000 threshold.
5. Confirming minimum total ICT spend of 30% on SMEs by 2022.
6. Allocating 2% of ICT budgets towards funding proof of concepts and innovative solutions from the local SME market.
7. As part of the above, twice a year, holding ICT SME “pitch days” involving leading agency buyers including but not limited to health, education and emergency services representatives.
8. The Queensland Government adopt a target of developing regional ICT to grow faster than the national average, measured against the digital inclusion index, to recover lost ground, particularly in North and North West Queensland. Meaningful, time based measurable quotas are required for successful and sustainable strategy execution.
9. AIIA would welcome the opportunity to work with the Queensland Government to develop a framework to achieve the above policy goal.
10. A QLD Consortium be established to develop an ICT ecosystem – a PPP involving attraction of cornerstone corporate actors, in conjunction with government, allied to skills building and research in collaboration with Universities and TAFEs, and the building out of the SME locally based players to ensure the supply chain leaves as much money in Queensland as is possible, developing capability that services Australia and the globe.
11. AIIA would welcome the opportunity to work with the Queensland Government to develop a framework to achieve the above policy goal.
12. Government to develop incentives to attract “cornerstone” ICT ecosystem head offices in order to create pull and clustering. Governments around the country and around the world have been utilising such incentives to motivate growth. Favourable payroll taxes, free / reduced land and buildings costs, per head subsidies for generating employment and the multiplier effect of that employment are just some of the ways investment could be targeted to bring the right kind of large corporate actors to all parts of Queensland around which to build a holistically planned ecosystem. These incentives should be coupled with clearly defined outcomes targeted at generating the benefits outlined for local industry and the local economy.
13. AIIA would welcome the opportunity to work with the Queensland Government to develop a framework to achieve the above policy goal.
14. Create a new dedicated Digital Minister with the focus, portfolio and budget to drive the policy recommendations here and for the government.
15. Formalise the creation of Service QLD Policy, framework and funding model to increase agencies adoption and support the acceleration of delivery of digital services for QLD citizens.
16. Replicate the funding model used by NSW, and created 10 years ago which has made NSW a leader in citizen services delivery. This requires significant long term thinking that is focused on creating outcomes for citizens.
17. Funding should be allocated to schools for training both students and teachers on digital skills, with a particular focus on underprivileged institutions and indigenous communities.
18. Increase funding to support and accelerate the current Qld Government funded trials for micro credentialing programs and expand to include QLD government technology workers.
19. Work with AIIA to develop an industry partnership to create the AIIA Digital Skills Guild. Through our membership ,the AIIA will work with key service providers (our members) to create a program of curriculum and training in the latest technologies at no cost for government employees. A number of large ICT organisations have already committed to providing material to support this initiative.
20. Target to train 50% of the IT workforce in QLD Government with basic new skills by 2022 through the AIIA Digital Skills Guild.
21. Target to offer training to 100% of non-IT workforce staff interested in reskilling and



enable new career pathways through the Digital Skills Guild by 2022.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editor**

- The AIIA recently released a white paper titled '[Building Australia's Digital Future in a Post-COVID World](#)', which emphasised the need to look beyond traditional infrastructure investment by government with more focus on technology infrastructure.

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**About AIIA**

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) is Australia's peak representative body and advocacy group for those in the digital ecosystem. Since 1978 AIIA has pursued activities to stimulate and grow the digital ecosystem, to create a favourable business environment for members and to contribute to Australia's economic prosperity. We do this by delivering outstanding member value by providing a strong voice of influence; building a sense of community through events and education; enabling a network for collaboration and inspiration; and developing compelling content and relevant and interesting information.