



Speech by

Dr DAVID WATSON

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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UNIQUEST

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Lib) (7.37 p.m.): I rise to bring to the attention of the House a presentation by Mr David Henderson, the managing director and CEO of Uniquet Pty Ltd, to the University of Queensland Senate last Thursday. As members might know, Uniquet is the company established by the previous vice-chancellor of the University of Queensland, Brian Wilson, in the 1980s as a mechanism to translate intellectual property developed by UQ researchers into commercial reality. It was an intelligent response well before any Smart State rhetoric.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Dr WATSON: The minister would know because he was a student at the time.

Uniquet is now very successful and I think deserves recognition for the progress it has made. David Henderson provided some interesting measures on just how successful Uniquet is on an international basis. First of all, the interesting thing is the growth in revenues. Since 1995 there has been a 400 per cent increase in revenues, from \$12.9 million to \$51.6 million, and this year they have provided \$6.7 million in profits.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Dr WATSON: I am going to get to that in a moment. The minister is quite right. Revenues doubled from 1995 to 1999, and they have doubled again since that time. 2002 has seen not only record profits and revenues but also seven start-up companies produced; the largest university technology transfer company start up, 52 new patents filed, 24 patents granted, 26 international aid projects, and the most AusAID period contracts in Australia. Also, Dr Mark Harvey was awarded the Australian Biotechnology Business Developer of the Year in 2002.

The most interesting statistic Mr Henderson provided was where Uniquet would rank on an international basis if it were included in the US rankings. In fact, if we look at the number of start-ups, University of Queensland/Uniquet would rank No. 10 along with universities like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The University of Michigan and Stanford University were just above it, and it was equal to or better than the University of Southern California, the University of Georgia, New York University, the University of Washington Research Foundation—those kinds of institutions.

Again, if we look at licence income, it would have ranked No. 8, ahead of Stanford and Tulane universities and just below the University of California Systems and Michigan State University. These are universities with far greater research expenditure than the University of Queensland can provide, and yet on an international basis it ranked in the top 10.