

Question on Notice
No. 192
Asked on 1 March 2006

MS MOLLOY asked the Minister for Small Business, Information Technology Policy and Multicultural Affairs (MR CUMMINS) —

QUESTION:

What is the Kickstart forum and how will it assist local ICT firms?

ANSWER:

First let me thank the Member for Noosa for this question and acknowledge her interest in the Queensland ICT industry.

The Beattie Government sponsored a major forum for the ICT industry on the Sunshine Coast in February. I addressed the Media Connect Kickstart Forum, attended by up to 60 technology and information and communications technology journalists from Australia and New Zealand and 40 ICT companies and industry associations. KickStart 2006 was the sixth such forum held in Australia specifically designed to connect ICT journalists, industry and government.

The forum gives us a great opportunity to promote our local ICT industry to journalists. Queensland is now a serious player in the global ICT scene and the Beattie Government has had a significant role in elevating the local industry to this level. We have established Australia's first organisation dedicated to developing the local ICT sector.

Since 1992, the Information Industries Bureau (IIB) has been servicing the State's ICT industry by creating supportive industry development policy initiatives, programs, seminars and events. In that time Queensland ICT has grown from a group of small innovative firms and entrepreneurs to a vibrant and dynamic industry leader in the Asia-Pacific region.

We've also initiated an unprecedented level of collaboration with the ICT industry to address barriers to growth including skills shortages and government procurement.

The Government/Industry ICT Workgroup and the ICT Ministerial Advisory Group were both providing significant input and feedback on government ICT policies and initiatives.

A 2005 industry survey found the State's ICT industry now employs more than 62,000 Queenslanders. In addition, the industry generated estimated revenues of \$21.1 billion dollars in sales in 2003-2004.

We now have many big names in the global ICT industry located in Queensland but a defining characteristic of our ICT sector is the predominance of small businesses.