

Media Release

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR APPEALS TO FEDS FOR SUPPORT AGAINST CYBER THREATS

4 November, 2019

The peak body for local government officers has reached out to the Australian Government for assistance in tackling cyber security threats at the local level.

“While local government is the closest public service entity to the average Australian, it is also the least resourced to tackle cyber security threats,” said Local Government Professionals Australia President, Mark Crawley.

“Local government budgets are under increasing pressure here with reduced revenue-raising capacity coupled with ageing infrastructure, increasing community expectations, and cost shifting from other levels of government.”

Local Government Professionals Australia has identified five ways the Australian Government could support local government in improving its cyber security in a submission made to the Government’s 2020 Cyber Security Strategy:

- 1. developing a minimum set of standards and compliance certifications or expanding the application of existing Commonwealth standards to local government*
- 2. increasing Australian Government-provided incentives and training in the recruitment of skilled IT workers in the cybersecurity field, particularly in encouraging work in regional and remote areas*
- 3. providing resources and training assistance to improve or deliver cyber awareness training for the broader local government workforce*
- 4. improving the ability to find the relevant material through filters or industry specific pathways to improve the functionality and uptake of the Australian Government’s Australian Cyber Security Centre resource site*
- 5. assisting in the identification and classing of critical infrastructure and then developing appropriate management plans to increase the understanding of risk and thus the security of this infrastructure.*

A report surveying local government CEOs and General Managers written by JLT in conjunction with Local Government Professionals Australia this year saw cybersecurity jump from being the 8th to the 2nd most prominent key risk (out of 13) for local governments from 2018 to 2019.

Most local government senior executives are acutely aware of the risks and vulnerabilities in the cyber security space but there is a resource gap in defending against them, according to Local Government Professionals Australia CEO, Clare Sullivan.

“As the managers of critical infrastructure and the frontline service delivery outlet for most



Australians, local government is in a unique position to protect public assets, but is also a growing target,” said Ms Sullivan.

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About Local Government Professionals Australia

Local Government Professionals Australia is the national component of the peak body representing local government professionals, with a focus on developing organisations and the broader local government sector, to build better communities around Australia.

Since the foundation of the organisation in 1936, LG Professionals Australia has created opportunities for the near 200,000 local government workforce across over 500 councils to come together to share ideas, discuss challenges and learn new ways of practice.

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