

MEDIA RELEASE

21 June 2016

For immediate release

ASCA welcomes government's smart city initiative

When the Federal Government launched its Smart City Policy a few months ago, the Australian Smart Communities Association (ASCA) gave it the thumbs up. Consequently, the government has now allocated (if re-elected) \$50 million for smart city and smart suburb initiatives from local councils.

"We believe this again will be an important proposal to assist Australian cities to take advantage of the many social and economic benefits that smart cities have to offer. However, it is essential that this policy is implemented in a strategic way with the citizens at its core," ASCA Executive Director Paul Budde said.

"Over the last few years ASCA has taken various initiatives to assist local communities, cities and industry aimed at ensuring Australia is able to build smart cities which deliver the social and economic outcomes for its citizens in the best possible way."

Mr Budde said ASCA's collaborative smart city model was based on cooperation between citizens, smart councils, national industry, local startups and entrepreneurs as well as the R&D community.

"Together they can develop social and economic viable projects that are up scalable and replicable across the country.

"It is no wonder that when the Federal Government launched its Smart City Policy, they were pleased with the progress that ASCA had already made, along the collaborative model presented in the government's policy document," he said.

"Part of the government's policy is a \$50 million competitive smart city and smart suburb program for local councils, and with the group assembled around ASCA we are in a prime position to maximise the outcome of the government's initiative and are keen to work with the government to make this happen."

Mr Budde said ASCA was keen to see that the government used the concept of live city labs – real-life projects which could function as demonstration models for other cities, councils, industry, and community groups.

"Different collaborative models can be built around one or more of the different smart city elements such as circular economy (waste, water, energy, smart buildings, etc), the digital economy (interconnected, sharing, digital), mobility (transport), healthcare (e-health), future capacity building (new jobs, education, R&D, innovation, startups, new tax revenue), and smart buildings and precincts.

"Industry can participate in these models on a collaborative basis and at the same time different groups can test different models with the aim that the best solutions win - at that stage these projects become up scalable and replicable."

Mr Budde said another key element in the government initiative should include a focus on the development of national standards for interoperability, operating systems and data hubs.



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"By using these live city labs, we can prevent the need for each city to invent its own wheel. The labs will also assist the local startups and it will also be the platform for schools to give their students a glimpse of what sort of new jobs and skills will be needed for the future development of the city.

"These are very exciting times ahead for those involved in the development of smart cities," he said.

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Australian Smart Communities Association

The Australian Smart Communities Association (ASCA) is a collaborative coalition of local government, Regional Development Australia and Regional Organisations of Councils built on the premise of sharing information and advocating for the resources to assist the localised transition to a digital economy.

ASCA's membership includes representatives from government, business, industry and communities across all states and territories in Australia.

The adoption of smart technology in city/town management, energy, water, health and transport, along with high-speed broadband, could add more than 70,000 jobs to the Australian economy and bring 1.5 percent growth to Australia's Gross Domestic Product within five years.

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