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Media Release

CYBER SECURITY PILOT TO BOLSTER SMALL TO MEDIUM BUSINESS AGAINST HACK ATTACKS

In an Australian first, the Cyber Security Cooperative Research Centre (CSCRC) will lead a 'hands on' pilot project focused on uplifting cyber security across Australia's small to medium business sector (SMEs).

The pilot, which is being launched in Adelaide today, will involve six South Australian SMEs across a broad range of critical sectors, from medical services to satellite technologies, measuring their baseline cyber security and providing practical, cost effective uplift solutions over six months.

A collaboration between the CSCRC, CyberCX, CSIRO's Data61 and the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), and supported by the Government of South Australia, the pilot will provide a blueprint for SME cyber uplift that can be rolled out across the nation.

"SMEs are the lifeblood of the Australian economy – they comprise more than 90 per cent of our nation's businesses, account for 33 per cent of GDP and employ more than 40 per cent of the workforce," said Rachael Falk, CEO of the CSCRC.

"However, when it comes to cyber security, they often lag behind, making them a soft target for cyber criminals. That is why SME uplift is such a cornerstone of the Federal Government's new cyber security strategy."

"The CSCRC recognises the cost and time pressures SMEs face in bolstering their cyber security and that they need simple, straightforward and cost-effective solutions, which is why this pilot is so important."

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, the Honourable Karen Andrews, said making our small and medium sized businesses more cyber fit was critical in an increasingly digital world.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has seen SMEs really lift their digital presence, which is an important step forward, but with that comes the increased risk of cyber attacks," Minister Andrews said.

"This pilot will build on our investments across Government to make sure our businesses are safe online, so they can grow and create more jobs for Australians."

The CSCRC is part of the Federal Government's Cooperative Research Centres program, administered by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, building collaborations between industry, government and academia. In 2018 the CSCRC was awarded \$50 million in Commonwealth funding over seven years. This funding is supplemented by contributions from industry, university and government agency Participants.

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