



Australian Government
**Department of Industry, Science,
Energy and Resources**

Senator Paul Scarr
Chair
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Scarr

On reviewing the Proof Hansard of the testimony given by the department at the Senate Estimates hearing on 1 April 2022, we find that some of the information provided to the Committee would benefit from clarification and correction.

The following exchange occurred between Senator Walsh and myself, Ms Donna Looney, Acting Head of Division, Industry Growth Division:

Ms Looney: As we point out in the Modern Manufacturing Strategy, we're really looking at the high-value added areas of manufacturing. The first thing I'll talk about is some of the work we're doing that is looking at where that technology development is happening at the moment and what that looks like in the future for Australian industry. The government is providing \$1.5 million to MTPConnect, which is the Medical Technology and Pharmaceuticals Growth Centre, to work with Pathology Technology Australia. They're going to undertake a rigorous examination of the diagnostic testing landscape, to identify gaps and opportunities and develop an action plan for establishing end-to-end sovereign capability for diagnostic testing, and an in-depth analysis of in vitro diagnostic devices, such as PCR tests and RATs, looking at the supply chain resilience around that. We're expecting that work to kick off in April.

Senator WALSH: So that's a new hub?

Ms Looney: It is. And we can talk about technology that is closer to commercialisation, I think it's fair to say. I have a range of things that have been supported to bring to market technology that's a little further along the development path. There's \$3 million to WA-based Avicena Systems, funded through the Modern Manufacturing Initiative's Manufacturing Translation Scheme, to develop a low-cost, ultra-high-throughput, lamp-based screening system for COVID-19. This technology will provide rapid results with very high precision. There was some funding of \$6.3 million to a company called GBS (APAC) Pty Ltd, again through the Modern Manufacturing Initiative, to build a new medical-device manufacturing facility to enable commercialisation of the printable organic electronic biosensor technology. There was \$742,000 to WA-based Alcolizer, which I think I spoke about last time I was here. That funding was provided through the \$30 million Commercialisation Fund, which the Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre is administering on behalf of the government. The test they're looking at will detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic and symptomatic patients within 10 minutes. Queensland based Examin Holdings was awarded \$647,000, also through the Commercialisation Fund, to finalise their COVID breath test, which they call ECBT. That includes a reading

device and software application and will be manufactured in Australia using a local supply chain capable of producing commercial orders.

The Government is providing \$1.5m to MTPConnect to work with Pathology Technology Australia to undertake rigorous examination of the diagnostic testing landscape and identify gaps and opportunities. They will also develop an action plan for establishing end-to-end sovereign capability for diagnostic testing and an in-depth analysis of in vitro diagnostic devices (such as PCR and RATs) supply chain resilience. This funding is therefore not for a hub.

I apologise for any inconvenience caused and ask that you alert other members of the Committee to this correction.

Yours sincerely



Donna Looney
Acting Head of Division
Industry Growth
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources

20 May 2022