

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green

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SUBJECT: Fraud Protection, AI

MEMBER: Ms BOLTON

### **Fraud Protection, AI**

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business. Can the minister advise what the government is undertaking to prevent financial fraud occurring using social engineering AI tools that is impacting governments, businesses and communities across the state, including recently Noosa Shire Council?

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I thank the member for Noosa for the question. I find it very interesting that here we are nearly 12 months into the new government and the number of questions she has asked me matches the number of questions I have been asked by the shadow minister. I would like to explain that the genesis of this question, no doubt, is the news around Noosa Shire Council over the last week. That is why I absolutely thank the member for the question.

The reality is that cyber attacks in this state—in fact, cyber attacks throughout the nation—are on the increase. For the benefit of the member for Noosa, and all members in this chamber, I would like to go through a couple of findings that have come through from a recent report from the Australian Signals Directorate. They released their Annual Cyber Threat Report for 2024-25 which showed that cyber attacks continue to occur, on average, every six minutes in this nation. Every six minutes there is a cybercrime. No doubt that is the reason the member for Noosa is as concerned as we are on this side of the chamber.

In relation to costs, the self-reported cost of cybercrime continues to increase. In fact, it is up by 50 per cent. In the case of businesses, both small and family and SMEs, that is around \$80,000 per reportable business. That is why this needs to be taken seriously, not just in this jurisdiction but throughout the nation.

As a government, we are never complacent, and we are well positioned to protect our assets and the personal data of Queenslanders. We will never ever take our eye off the ball because the more we move towards digital data the more it will mean those protections have to be front and centre of everything we do.

Interestingly, October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month. It is an opportunity to remind people of a range of things that are out there. My department, for example, is using this month as an opportunity, throughout the state wherever I go, to promote the range of activities that we can provide, particularly, for the member for Noosa's benefit, in the small and family business area.

We have a range of programs. I announced earlier this year that we partnered with COSBOA for our Cyber Wardens program, and I invite any member to visit the [business.qld.gov.au](http://business.qld.gov.au) website to get more information about that. The reality is that COSBOA, working hand in glove with the cybersecurity wardens and the Crisafulli government, is making sure we take cybersecurity to its highest level in this state. I thank the member for Noosa for the question.