

Boeing good for business



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Local businesses will benefit from a range of supply chain opportunities following an announcement that Boeing Australia will establish an uncrewed-aircraft production facility in the western corridor. Boeing will construct the facility at the Wellcamp Aerospace and Defence Precinct to produce and assemble the Boeing Airpower Teaming System, also known as the Loyal Wingman.

Ipswich Mayor Teresa Harding said the announcement signalled significant potential for the Ipswich business community. "South East Queensland, and in particular our western corridor, is Queensland's defence epicentre," Mayor Harding said.

"This investment by Wagners, Boeing and the State in Toowoomba will continue to expand the supply chain and capability opportunities for Ipswich businesses. "Ipswich has a strong defence and aerospace ecosystem, supported by Council programs such as Operation Scale-Up and the City of Ipswich Industry Development and Attraction Committee (CIDIDAC).

"From our discussions with Boeing, we know that 70 percent of the content on each Loyal Wingman aircraft will be Australian. Our businesses are well positioned to take advantage of that. "While it is understandable that Wellcamp is able to offer Boeing less restrictive access to airspace than is possible at Amberley, locating this first-of-its-kind facility in Toowoomba represents the best of both worlds for Ipswich businesses."

Council recently hosted the graduation for Operation Scale-Up where 24 small and medium businesses from across the south-east have received one-on-one mentoring from industry primes. Mayor Harding said Operation Scale-Up 2021 was developed to ensure local businesses were ready to capitalise on defence and advanced manufacturing growth.

"Ipswich is the home of Australia's largest Air Force base at Amberley, which provides more than 5,000 jobs, and our broader defence sector generates \$1.4 billion in annual export value," Mayor Harding said.

"Council has discovered the most valuable aspect of Operation Scale-Up 2021 was the relationships and connections it created; not just between primes and aspiring supply chain partners, but across the supply chain network. "We thank our mentors and our graduates for investing their time and effort in building the defence industry capability of our local businesses."

Successful businesses on the Operation Scale-Up program received mentoring from defence industry partners, including Rheinmetall Defence Australia, Boeing Defence Australia, Raytheon Australia, Northrup Grumman Australia, Airbus Australia and RUAG Australia.

The program, a first of its kind in Australia, offered 24 regional businesses the opportunity to become defence industry ready by developing an action plan and working with leading defence industry partners over a three-month period.