

# ALGA FEDERAL BUDGET 2023-24 PRIORITY

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CYBERSECURITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

### Commitment sought

**\$10 million** to scope local government's preparedness to deal with cyber-attacks and data breaches.

### What is the issue?

Cyber-attacks are increasingly an issue for all levels of government, as well as the private sector. Research has indicated that local governments are not resourced to deal with cyber-attacks

### Why does it matter?

Local governments collect and hold a significant amount of sensitive information, including credit card information, plans for buildings, information about essential infrastructure, and connections through to state government IT systems.

### Additional information

The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) reported in the Annual Cyber Threat Report that the ACSC received over 76,000 cybercrime reports, an increase of nearly 13 per cent from the previous financial year. This equates to one report every seven minutes.

Based on this growing threat, there is an urgent need for federal, state and territory governments to support local government to assess its cyber maturity and readiness to deal with cyber-attacks.

The availability of cyber-insurance is diminishing at a rapid rate and local government needs to proactively promote its ongoing cyber security investment and improvements to ensure that it can obtain insurance in order to continue to operate.

Cyber-attacks are mostly from overseas and from national actors or government-sanctioned criminals, making cyber security a national security and federal government issue.

Recent audits including surveys of local governments in [New South Wales](#) and [Western Australia](#) have found common cyber security improvements that can be made across Australian councils.

These include improving multi-factor authentication, improved permissions controls, planning for responses to major data breaches, dedicated training for councils in councils, improved phishing testing, and better securing information held on old and redundant software and hardware.

However, further work is required to scope the risks and opportunities across all councils, to support a consistent approach to improving the sector's cyber-security capacity.

*ALGA is also calling for the appointment of a dedicated Local Government Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) in the Australian Cyber Security Centre in the Australian Signals Directorate of the Federal Government's department of Homeland Affairs.*

