

**Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett JP**

**Engineering Ocean Solutions**

**AMC Jakovich Centre**

**8.30am, Wednesday 18 September 2025**

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Thank you Professor Collard.

Kaya Wanju, Hello and Welcome to Engineering Ocean Solutions.

I acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Nyungar nation the traditional custodians of the land we have gathered on today and I pay respect to their Elders past and present, and I extend that respect to First Nations people who are with us today.

I acknowledge:

Our MCs for today

- Andrew Outhwaite, Managing Director, For Blue;
- Mo Jaimangal, Jupiter AI;
- Representatives from across local government and the business sector;
- Ladies and gentlemen, one and all.

It is a privilege to be here with you today and to have this chance to share with you why Cockburn is a place of incredible opportunity and why we are happy to sponsor this unique event, which continues to grow in influence and impact each year.

Engineering Ocean Solutions has become the leading forum that attracts engineers, innovators, researchers and leaders who are tackling ocean-related challenges with ingenuity and purpose.

I trust you found yesterday's site visits insightful providing the opportunity to see first-hand the opportunities that continue to unfold and how you, or your local government or business can contribute to the challenges ahead.

Cockburn is a place where you can have it all - whether you're looking for somewhere to do business, somewhere to invest, or somewhere to call home.

We are home to a vibrant community of 130,000 residents and over 9,200 businesses across 24 suburbs.

Our commercial precincts employ more than 18,000 people and contribute nearly 30% of employment in Perth's south-west corridor.

We generate close to \$12 billion in regional exports annually.

And there is significant opportunity in this region in the blue economy and support of naval, coastal and offshore engineering industries.

Cockburn is at the heart of a \$15 billion marine manufacturing and technology cluster, supporting industries along the Indian Ocean coastline, from defence and advanced manufacturing to tourism, energy, and coastal preservation.

With \$45 billion in shipbuilding orders projected in WA by 2040, Cockburn is positioned to lead in the defence and maritime sectors.

We recognise the immense potential of the blue economy to attract investment, create jobs, and futureproof our local economy.

Marine industries already surpass agriculture and coal in economic value to Australia.

In Cockburn, they are anchored by the Australian Marine Complex and supported by business precincts in Henderson, Latitude 32, Jandakot, and Bibra Lake.

One of our key roles is to support the local employers and innovators who already call Cockburn home.

We also want to offer opportunity to our First Nations businesses and to that end, we held our inaugural yarning event earlier this year where we connected First Nations businesses with prime contractors.

This was the start of an initiative we intend to build on.

Central to Cockburn's vision is the Henderson Research and Innovation Hub, currently in development.

This advanced facility will foster collaboration, drive research and commercialisation, and strengthen local supply chains.

It will support over 40 defence and maritime businesses, alongside WA's leading universities, specialist RTOs, investors, and not-for-profits.

We have already engaged world-leading marine industries to be part of the Hub and we believe that Cockburn can become the Silicon Valley of the blue economy.

The Hub will focus on two key streams:

- Blue economy and ocean sustainability: marine biodiversity, climate adaptation, offshore renewables, AI and robotics.
- Defence innovation: undersea surveillance, quantum communications, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, and data analytics.

In closing, Cockburn is experiencing significant economic momentum.

As a local government, we play a practical role in enabling this growth; facilitating jobs, skills development, supply chain resilience, and innovation.

The message we want business leaders and politicians to take away today is simple.

Cockburn is open for business.

Thank you.