

Construction industry research gets government support

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THE Western Australian Government has thrown its support behind the Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation to begin coordinating industry research efforts in developing new methods and efficiencies in the commercial building sector.

The **CRC** for Construction Innovation, headquartered at Queensland University of Technology, is a national research, development and implementation centre focused on the needs of the property, design, construction and facility management sectors.

Housing and Works Minister Michelle Roberts said the construction industry was critically important to WA and its economy, and the Government was keen to ensure the industry had the support it needs.

Under the plan, the Government will provide \$300,000 a year in financial support, and a further \$100,000 in goods and services.

"The centre is aimed at building cooperation between industry, government and researchers," Roberts said.

"Research has not always been a high priority in the construction industry – particularly when there is huge pressure to just get the job done.

"By coordinating research efforts in the construction industry, the Cooperative Research Centre can achieve more than the individual areas of the industry could achieve on their own."

Roberts said the **CRC** for Construction Innovation was already undertaking research on issues important to the WA Government and the state's construction industry.

"The results of the centre's research will provide a firm foundation as we work towards an increasingly productive and sustainable construction industry," Roberts said.

Curtin University will be the primary focus of the **CRC**'s research in WA, which will examine issues including:

- Achieving better value in project delivery, particularly in terms of time and cost;
- Increasing efficiency and effectiveness in construction procurement;
- Developing effective interaction and communication between industry and clients;
- Improving knowledge management and knowledge flow in the industry;
- Developing ways of improving whole-of-life-cycle costs and sustainability; and
- Developing better tools for managing construction risk.

Roberts said construction was an area demanding further research and innovation, especially considering the growth of the industry in WA, which increased by 39.7% in the four years to June 2005, along with building activity, which rose by 52.6% in the three years to June 2005, to be worth \$5.625 billion in 2004-05.

Roberts said that in the same period, engineering construction also increased by 87.2% to be worth \$5.838 billion.