



300 new IT jobs for city

(Source: Ballarat Courier newspaper)

PREMIER John Brumby took the high ground while announcing 300 new jobs in Ballarat yesterday.

Mr Brumby perched on top of a ladder to address the staff of IBM Australia, announcing a new \$10.8 million IT Services Centre would be built at the University of Ballarat Technology Park.

"This is a big step forward for one of the nation's most vibrant regional centres," Mr Brumby said.

"This is a massive vote of confidence in Ballarat."

The centre will manage specialist ICT services, software application development, ICT support and consulting for IBM's global operations, servicing clients across the United States, Europe and the Asia Pacific region.

It is expected to create 300 jobs over the next five years and pump an estimated \$61 million into the local economy.

The centre will be a partnership between IBM Australia, the City of Ballarat, the University of Ballarat and the State Government, which has contributed \$5 million from the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund to help

build the 3500 square metre building.

Mr Brumby said IBM had been a major player in the University of Ballarat Technology Park since its inception.

"This company is investing again in the city's future."

IBM integrated technology services manager for Australia and New Zealand John Twine said it was "great to . . . continue our journey with Ballarat".

"Ballarat offers not only the infrastructure, but also high quality graduates who enable us to accelerate the development of innovative technology solutions for our clients across the globe," Mr Twine said.

University of Ballarat Vice-Chancellor Professor David Battersby said IBM was an "important anchor tenant" of the technology park.

"Currently, IBM employs 817 people in Ballarat and 50 per cent of these comprise graduates or students of the university," he said.

Information and Communication Technology Minister Theo Theophanous said IBM's decision to base its centre in Ballarat reaffirmed Victoria's place at the centre of Australia's ICT industry.

"These things do not happen by accident, but is a strategic collaboration."

Ballarat has the largest proportion of ICT employees in regional Victoria and the third largest in regional Australia.