New tech partnership to connect Australia's two oldest cities
Sense-T draws in Sydney tech company and highly-skilled jobs for Tasmania

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) and Sirca today announced a partnership to establish a high-tech hub in Hobart, connecting Australia's two oldest cities and bringing skilled ICT jobs to Tasmania.

Under the agreement, Sydney-based Sirca will establish a team of eight software engineers and data experts to work with Sense-T to develop its big data platform.* The team will be co-located with Sense-T at its UTAS offices in Hobart from around April 2014.

Sirca will also later establish a Hobart arm of its financial services operations. The company ingests data from 300 stock exchanges around the world, managing two million transactions per second and providing key services for Thomson Reuters. It is scouting accommodation that can match its high-spec offices at The Rocks.

The partnership seeks to establish Tasmania as a hub for world-class big data engineering and research, drawing in existing local technology businesses and enticing new ones.

UTAS Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the agreement connected two leaders in big data to create a formidable partnership and enormous opportunities for Tasmania.

"The partnership will establish Tasmania as *the* place to come if you want to work or study in the field of data analytics, software engineering and computing," he said. "It also creates a doorway for UTAS students to enter Sydney's tech industry and bring their experience back to contribute to Tassie's emerging digital economy."

Sirca CEO Mike Briers said the company was drawn to Hobart by the global potential of Sense-T. The lure of the Tasmanian lifestyle was also a big drawcard.

 "We want to work at the cutting-edge of big data and technology on a program that contributes something important to society. Sense-T is that project," Dr Briers said.

"Then we looked around and realised what Hobart has to offer in terms of expertise through UTAS, CSIRO and existing technology businesses and decided to establish an arm of our financial services here too.

"There are some real commercial advantages to setting up in Hobart. Not to mention the added bonus of a 15 minute commute, a pristine environment, affordable property and some of the world's best food and wine," he said.

Sense-T Director Ros Harvey said Sirca's expertise would be invaluable as proponents positioned to capitalise on growing international interest in the program.

"We're moving Sense-T from the lab to the commercial environment," she said. "We've already been approached by organisations in the US and Europe that are interested in deploying Sense-T technology.

"We look forward to working with Sirca and our other partners to make that happen."

This is Sense-T's software and cloud-based technology infrastructure that ingests sensor data from across the state. It is the backbone for Sense-T, enabling data to be stored, processed, analysed and accessed in formats people can use and in a way that protects privacy.

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About Sense-T
sense-t.org.au

Sense-T is creating the world's first economy-wide sensor network. It is drawing real-time data from sensors across the state and combining it with other important data sets. It is starting with food production and adding other industries to build a digital view of the complex relationships across an economy. Data can then be available through online tools and smart phone apps that support people to make better decisions, for example when to irrigate, how much fertiliser to use or how to access new markets. Sense-T is a shared data resource available to businesses, governments, researchers and communities. It respects privacy and is transparent about data use. Sense-T brings the power of big data to communities, helping us all to be more efficient, competitive and sustainable.

Sense-T is a partnership between the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Government, CSIRO (through the Australian Centre for Broadband Innovation) and IBM. It is also funded by the Australian Government.

About SIRCA
sirca.org.au

SIRCA is a global leader with time-series big data software and services. Originally a University spinout, SIRCA is inventor of advanced data pre-analytics technology now used extensively in the Financial Services domain. In partnership with Thomson Reuters, SIRCA has created what is now the world's leading financial market archive *Thomson Reuters Tick History* which houses tick-by-tick data from every major stock exchange and other types of markets in the world.