

## **We need results not rhetoric to cut cyber crime**

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Canberra: Today, the Social Cyber Institute released a submission to the federal government calling for more concrete results in fighting criminals and spies in cyberspace. The country has a reputation among hackers for being an easy and lucrative target.

The submission's author, Dr Greg Austin, believes that the federal government's cyber strategy must be judged by its results. "Three cyber security strategies—in 2009, 2016, and 2020—have not led to a visible reduction in cybercrime or espionage in spite of major reforms and hundreds of millions of dollars invested in national and state agencies. We need more comprehensive cyber attack data and new policy targets to hold government to account," Dr Austin said.

According to Dr Austin, the biggest challenge in fighting cybercrime that cuts across all cyber policy silos, including police and intelligence agencies, is the need for an adequate highly skilled cyber workforce. "We knew about this ten years ago, and it is still not fixed. The problem is now being aggravated by the rapid take-up of artificial intelligence applications which is hitting us very hard with new demands for additional IT workers with even more complex talents," he added.

The submission to the federal government's expert panel reviewing cyber security has been published today by the Social Cyber Institute (SCI) as part of a discussion paper, '[Australian Cyber Policy Reform: Urgency, Coherence, and Depth](#).' The SCI is a start-up that was launched at a University of New South Wales venture capital forum in 2018.

Professor Glenn Withers AO, Director of SCI, stated that his research team made a separate group submission to the review body, a [Six-Point Plan for Australian Cyber Policy](#). The plan takes the government to task for lack of effective responses to cybercrime and failure to give the Australian public a full picture of cyber threats. It called for more 'honest' statistics on cybercrime, a program of legal reform, and a new parliamentary committee exclusively for cyberspace.

"We believe that urgent, coherent, and deep reform is required in Australian cyber policy to address the challenges of cybercrime and cyber security. The government must take a proactive approach to tackle these issues effectively. We hope that our submissions will assist the government in developing a more comprehensive and effective strategy for cyber policy," Professor Withers said.

The SCI submission and the Six-Point Plan for Australian Cyber Policy are available for public access. The Social Cyber Group urges the public and community groups to engage with this opportunity for a more rigorous cyber security policy.

### **About Social Cyber Institute**

The Social Cyber Institute (SCI) creates new social science insights to complement technology in the fight for a more secure cyberspace. SCI is the public research and public analytic arm of the Social Cyber Group which also offers advisory and training services.

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