



**House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Communications**

Chair: Ms Belinda Neal MP  
Deputy Chair: Mrs Kay Hull MP

## **New report calls for a Cyber Crime Tsar**

Australian home computer users and small businesses have been left to fend for themselves against the growing problem of organised cyber crime, according to a new report by the House of Representatives Communications Committee.

The report - **Hackers, Fraudsters and Botnets: Tackling the Problem of Cyber Crime** – is the result of a year-long inquiry into the problem of computer crime and online identity theft and fraud. The report, released last night (21 June) in Canberra, makes 34 recommendations aimed at improving Australia's response to the growing problem of cyber crime.

The House Communications Committee recommends that an **Office of Online Security** be established within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, headed by a **Cyber Security Coordinator**. The Office should coordinate cyber crime policy across Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, and foster partnerships with industry and the community.

Committee Chair Belinda Neal says "Australia needs to take a cyber-space perspective and cut through the territorial and jurisdictional boundaries of traditional institutions".

The Committee also recommends a **national 24 hour cyber crime reporting facility**. Ordinary members of the public need a 'one stop shop' to report cyber-crime – one that provides initial advice, take reports and makes referrals.

"The infection of home computers, compromised websites, fake sites, online scams and fraud have all become a very significant problem," Ms Neal said.

"These attacks are spread through compromised machines organised into botnets, often controlled by criminals overseas. Thousands of compromised computers are detected every day by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, with many people often unaware that their personal financial information is at risk of theft by criminals operating online.

"By centralising the reporting process consumers will get the immediate level of service they deserve. It is vital that police and other agencies can aggregate the data to detect large-scale organised crime that is pervasive on the Internet."

A **mandatory e-security code of practice** for the Internet industry that goes beyond the industry's recently launched voluntary code has also been recommended.

"The Internet Service Providers should not shoulder a disproportionate amount of the cyber crime burden, but ISPs are in a unique position to inform consumers if their computer is infected. End users must also take responsibility for protecting themselves online to prevent the spread of computer viruses to the rest of the community," Ms Neal said.

### **MEDIA CONFERENCE TODAY**

**A media conference will be held at 11.30am on Tuesday 22 June 2010 in 2S1, Parliament House, Canberra.**

**The media conference will be webcast at <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>**

To arrange media comment from the Chair, Ms Belinda Neal MP, call (02) 6277 4971 or 423550330.

**Hackers, Fraudsters and Botnets: Tackling the Problem of Cyber Crime** is available on the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/coms/reports.htm> or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002 or via email at [coms.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:coms.reps@aph.gov.au)