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New structures to fight cybercrime in South Africa



By **Rohan Isaacs** and **Tatum Govender** on October 28, 2015

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Cybercrime happens at the speed of broadband with criminals able to easily move the tools of their activities from one location to another. Successfully combatting cybercrime therefore requires real time detection and investigation, often by different agencies in different countries.

Cybercrime has exploded internationally in the past several years in tandem with the surge of online data. South Africa has not been immune as daily reports of phishing attacks, identity theft and other online crimes attest. The **Cybercrimes and Cybersecurity Bill** represents a significant step forward in South Africa's efforts to combat this onslaught.

The Bill establishes a number of structures designed to assist law enforcement authorities in combatting cybercrime.

National Cybercrime Centre

A National Cybercrime Centre will be established within the South African Police Service (SAPS). This will be responsible for:

- establishing a cyber-forensics capacity;
- developing measures to deal with any impacts of cybersecurity on law enforcement;
- and
- analysing cyber security incidents, trends and vulnerabilities.

24/7 Point of Contact

A difficulty currently faced by law enforcement authorities is that cybercrime happens more quickly than legislation. Building a winnable case requires specific skills and investigation techniques together with prosecutors who understand the cybercrime environment. It is therefore important to facilitate close co-ordination between the police who investigate these cases and the prosecutors who try them.

The Bill therefore establishes a 24/7 Point of Contact operating 24-hours per day, 7 days per week. It

brings together police and prosecutors with relevant knowledge and experience of cybercrime so as to

facilitate and speed detection, investigation and prosecution. It will be staffed mainly by members of SAPS but will include a member of the National Prosecuting Authority with particular knowledge and skills regarding cybercrime.

The 24/7 Point of Contact will co-operate with similar law enforcement agencies around the world. The borderless nature of cybercrime means that no South African cybercrime enforcement agency can operate in isolation from its global counterparts.

Cyber Command

The Bill also establishes a network of other cybersecurity structures to design and implement cybersecurity policy within South Africa. A Cyber Command will be established within the Department of Defence to develop cyber offensive and defensive capabilities of the South African Defence Force.

Remember that comments on the Bill are due by **30 November 2015**.

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