



Ukraine strengthening its cyber security

By Alex Statko for Southeast European Times in Kiev | 2014-09-15

Western experts are assisting Ukraine to improve its cyber defence.



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Experts believe that it is important to launch information security awareness training for the employees of government institutions to increase cyber security. [AFP]

NATO foreign ministers endorsed a package of support measures to strengthen Ukraine's defence capability, including the creation of new trust funds to improve the country's cyber defence system.

"Ukraine has a clear vision for rebuilding its defence and security sector and a clear strategy for resolving the crisis," NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said.

The US European Command (EUCOM) recently hosted a Ukrainian military delegation in a first-ever US-Ukrainian cyber conference in Germany.

During the two-day conference, US cyber experts worked with Ukrainian authorities to develop Ukraine's military communications and cyber strategy by training and equipping military forces to reduce risks to missions. Specialists discussed the current cyber and communications challenges facing the military, providing functional assessments and recommending solutions.

Meanwhile, due to the ongoing conflict with pro-Russian militants in eastern Ukraine and the number of cyber-attacks, authorities in Kiev are working on a law of cyber security strategy.

"We presented this document to the cabinet of ministers in July and next month, I hope, deputies will adopt the law about cyber security," Dmytro Dubov, head of the research department of information strategies at the National Institute for Strategic Studies under the president of Ukraine, told *SETimes*. "Taking into consideration ongoing Russian aggression on Ukraine's territory, the law is necessary for us."

The law determines the power distribution of all law enforcement agencies and their order of interaction in case of cyber-attacks.

"It is a very important step now," Dubov said. "This question can't be postponed. Mainly websites of government agencies are attacked. And what if cyber terrorists, for example, try to open the dam of our hydroelectric station? Such a potential threat is possible, and we have to think about it now. We need to enhance the protection of critical infrastructure."

Ukraine's state agencies' websites have already experienced cyber-attacks since the beginning of the conflict in country's east. In late July, the president administration website stopped working for hours. Specialists said it was influenced by one of the most powerful cyber-attacks over the past few years.

"A DDOS [distributed denial-of-service] attack on the website of the president of Ukraine lasted almost six hours. We send all the information through information agencies," Sviatoslav Tsegolko, President Petro Poroshenko's press secretary, wrote on his Facebook page.

"The websites of the General Prosecutor's Office, the National Security Council and Defence were also under DDOS attacks," Vitaliy Kuksa, press secretary of the State Special Communications Service, told *SETimes*.

The service includes the CERT-UA unit, a quick-reaction team for cyber-attacks, which is formed by top experts of computer security and responsible for protecting Ukraine's cyberspace.

"It was a very strong attack, but we were able to repel it," Kuksa said.

Experts believe that it is important to launch information security awareness training for the employees of government institutions to increase the cyber security.

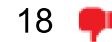
"The problem is that many employees of government agencies are still using the Russian postal services, [such as] mail.ru, for their work and business correspondence, despite the fact that we

actually have war against Russia," Mykola Kostynyan, cyber security coach, told *SETimes*. "War on the digital front is now no further than the real front line. And we must remember that."

How important is increased information security awareness at the state institutions? Join the discussion below.

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If they even brazenly jammed channel Inter, what cyber security do we have?? And that's from Ukrainian territory.. What can you then say about enemy reconnaissance?

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