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Cyber Solidarity Five Nations, One Mission

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Cyber attacks, we've been saying for some time now, are the ultimate borderless crimes: they can come from anywhere, anytime, impacting millions of people and systems across the planet in the blink of an eye.

That's why we in the global law enforcement community have been steadily building operational partnerships at every turn—through a growing number of joint investigations and both formal and informal collaborations and task forces.

One of the latest initiatives along these lines is one of the most promising—five countries from three continents banding together to fight cyber crime in a synergistic way by sharing intelligence, swapping tools and best practices, and strengthening and even synchronizing their respective laws.

It all began in September 2006, when high-level cyber cops from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States met at FBI Headquarters and formed the **Strategic Alliance Cyber Crime Working Group**.

The group is one outgrowth of the larger Strategic Alliance Group—a formal partnership between these nations dedicated to tackling larger global crime issues, particularly organized crime.



The latest meeting of the Strategic Alliance Cyber Crime Working Group was held earlier this month in London. Each country presented plans on key issues laid out by the group, including ways to share forensic tools, possibilities for joint training, and strategies for a public awareness campaign to help reduce cyber crime.

"It's a terrific group of people who really have their eye on the ball when it comes to cyber crime," says Special Agent Donna Peterson, Acting Assistant Section Chief in our Cyber Division, who chaired the March meeting on behalf of the FBI. "We've learned a lot from each other, and it's already paying dividends for all of us."

Among the group's other activities and accomplishments:

- Collectively developed a comprehensive overview of the transnational cyber threat—including current and emerging trends, vulnerabilities, and strategic initiatives for the working group to pursue (note: the report is available only to law enforcement);
- Set up a special area on Law Enforcement Online, the FBI's secure Internet portal, to share information and intelligence;
- Launched a series of information bulletins on emerging threats and trends (for example, we drafted a bulletin recently describing how peer-to-peer, or P2P, file sharing programs can inadvertently leak vast amounts of sensitive national security, financial, medical, and other information);
- Began exploring an exchange of cyber experts to serve on joint international task forces and to learn each other's investigative techniques firsthand; and
- Shared training curriculums and provided targeted training to international cyber professionals.

Next up: a three-day conference in the U.S. in May, hosted by the FBI, that will bring together legal and legislative experts from the five countries to talk about common challenges, differing approaches, and potential ways to streamline investigations and harmonize laws on everything from data retention

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standards to privacy requirements.

There's plenty more to come. In the months ahead, we'll keep you posted on the continuing efforts of the working group.

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